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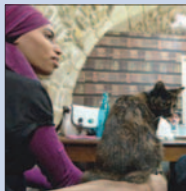
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OLYMPICS



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‘A breakdown in ethical behavior’

Spokesman: Hagel worried servicemembers’ misdeeds ‘stain the honor’ of military

By JON HARPER
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel is concerned that a series of ethical lapses by servicemembers might be indicators of a systemic problem within the U.S. military, Pentagon press secretary Rear Adm. John Kirby told reporters at the Defense Department on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, Navy leaders announced that staff members at the Navy’s nuclear propulsion school in Charleston, S.C., are suspected of cheating on a written qualification exam for instructors who teach sailors how to operate nuclear reactors. Last month, the Air Force was rocked by revelations that nuclear launch officers were involved in a cheating

scandal and an illegal narcotics scandal.

Kirby said Hagel is “deeply troubled” by those incidents. A 60-day review of the U.S. nuclear enterprise is underway, and service leaders are expected to develop an action plan to deal with personnel, management and cultural problems within the force.

In the news conference, Kirby pointed out that the military is still tackling the issue of sexual assault within the ranks, which has received a lot of attention from lawmakers alarmed by statistics released by the Pentagon indicating that thousands of servicemembers are sexually assaulted by their comrades each year.

SEE ETHICS ON PAGE 2

Left in the cold

Storm knocks out power
to more than 1 million
Page 9



MATT ROUNKE/AP

A woman inspects a downed tree that took out a utility line and landed atop a minivan after a winter storm on Wednesday in Philadelphia. The Northeast’s second storm of the week dumped more than a foot of snow in some states.

Boehner: Link debt ceiling extension, COLA cuts

By ROBERT COSTA
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — House Speaker John Boehner scrambled Wednesday to sell raising the debt ceiling to his Republican colleagues, urging them to demand a restoration of recently cut military benefits in exchange for

a one-year extension of the federal government’s borrowing authority.

Though Boehner, R-Ohio, did not formally endorse the idea as his own, he did ask his lieutenants to test it among rank-and-file Republicans.

Boehner’s inner circle said he is trying to find a solution that can pass the House without rupturing the

fractious Republican conference, in which disagreement over past debt-limit strategies has caused considerable turmoil. He also wants to avoid a fight with the White House, which has long resisted GOP attempts to extract major concessions on the debt ceiling.

SEE BOEHNER ON PAGE 3



Boehner

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I think it's meant to be off-putting. It's a schlumpy guy in underpants in an all-women environment."

— Sarah Wall-Randell, an English professor at Wellesley College, on a lifelike sculpture of a nearly nude sleepwalking man placed at a busy area of campus at the Massachusetts school

See story on Page 10

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2. Hagel worried unethical servicemembers 'stain the honor' of US
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COMING SOON

Shifting Gears

Volkswagen celebrates the Beetle



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MILITARY



AP

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is ordering military leaders to put a renewed emphasis on moral behavior across the force following a series of ethical lapses that have included cheating scandals among the Navy and Air Force's nuclear missions.

Ethics: Hagel is concerned over damage to military's image

FROM FRONT PAGE

Examples of bad behavior among general officers prompted Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to conduct an ethics review of the senior officer corps in 2012.

"If you just take a look at recent incidents — and I'm not just talking about in the last few weeks, last few months, even the last couple of years — I think he's generally concerned that there could be at least at some level a breakdown in ethical behavior and in the demonstration of moral courage," Kirby said.

Kirby defined moral courage as "doing the right thing when nobody is looking [and] treating people the right way, even when they can't do anything for you."

Hagel believes that malfeasance within the military is getting worse.

"He definitely sees this as a growing problem," Kirby said. "And he's concerned about the

depth of it. I don't think he could stand here and tell you that ... anybody has the full grasp here."

"And that's what worries the secretary is that maybe we don't — maybe he doesn't have the full grasp of the depth of the issue, and he wants to better understand it," Kirby said.

Dempsey told the Wall Street Journal last week that the military will focus more on ethics training going forward, and he suggested that an officer's character should be given more emphasis in the promotion system.

One military ethicist said the problems are complex.

"There is a long tradition in the Navy — when I was at the Academy — of circulating good test preparation; so good, in fact, that sometimes it was the real answers," said Nancy Sherman, a philosophy professor at Georgetown University in Washington who was the inaugural Distinguished Chair in Ethics at the Naval Academy in the mid-1990s

when there was a big cheating scandal.

"The pressures that people feel who wear the uniform, who have an idealized view of what it means to wear the uniform, can sometimes cause them to put undue pressure on themselves," she said. "In battle, especially, many unduly blame themselves for enemy action or accidents that take their buddies' lives. That same solidarity means that they sometimes pledge unconditional fidelity to each other, and that means they will sometimes act in ways that can be seen as unethical."

Sherman is skeptical on the usefulness of any review.

"Will a review do anything? No," she said. "Not if it's a 15-minute classroom review of codes of conduct. Small groups, with real, candid discussion to find out the motivations of people who cheat, that might work."

The U.S. military is the most respected public institution in the

United States, according to numerous surveys taken since 9/11. Hagel fears that high-profile scandals could damage the image of the Armed Forces among the American people.

"He's mindful that the vast majority serve very honorably every day, but it doesn't take more than a few to stain the honor and the integrity of the entire force," Kirby said. "And I think that's what we're starting to see now. He's concerned about the health of the force and the health of the strong culture of accountability and responsibility that Americans have come to expect from their military."

Kirby said putting more focus on ethics will be a high priority for Hagel and DOD leaders going forward, although he did not announce any new initiatives in this regard.

Stars and Stripes editor Patrick Dickson contributed to this report. harper.jon@stripes.com Twitter: @JHarperStripes



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MILITARY

Groups urge boost in spending for veterans

By MATTHEW M. BURKE

Stars and Stripes

The federal government will fall well short of meeting veterans' health care and benefits needs in the coming years, several leading veterans' service organizations said this week, and tens of billions of dollars in additional spending will be needed to adequately address the issue.

The 28th annual "Independent Budget" — recommendations "by veterans for veterans" for funding and policy changes for fiscal 2015 and beyond — was released Tuesday by the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Paralyzed Veterans of America, Disabled American Veterans and American Veterans. The report calls for \$72.9 billion in additional health, benefits, claim processing and infrastructure spending for the fiscal 2015 budget, which sets aside money in advance for future fiscal years.

The Department of Veterans Affairs receives funding for health care in advance to help plan and manage care. Advance appropriations can be revised before the start of the fiscal year in question, although that doesn't always happen.

The groups called on Congress to add the rest of the VA funding to the advance appropriations process.

"The VA health-care system has been shielded from the severe negative consequences of political gridlock that ultimately led to a partial government shutdown last fall," said Bill Lawson, national president of Paralyzed Veterans of America, in a statement.

"It is time that the rest of the VA is afforded the same protection."

The authors of the plan say one of the greatest concerns is the severely underfunded VA construction account, which upgrades rapidly aging facilities, making

them safe for the millions of sick, wounded and injured veterans of all generations. From fiscal 2002 through fiscal 2014, the group's annual budget proposals have recommended a total of \$23.5 billion for VA construction. However, less than \$13.5 billion has been appropriated by the federal government during that period.

"World-class health care requires first-class facilities, but through 13 years of war, VA construction accounts have only received 57 percent of what's required, and we project VA will need to invest \$31 billion over the next decade to close its major and minor construction gaps," VFW National Commander William Thien said in the statement. The Independent Budget recommendations for revisions in actual spending for fiscal 2015 include:

■ \$2.3 billion more for health care for fiscal 2015 than the \$58.8 billion the administration

recommended in advance.

■ \$2.7 billion more than the \$3.9 billion appropriated for all construction programs in fiscal 2015.

■ \$25 million more than the \$611 million appropriated for medical and prosthetics research in fiscal 2015.

The budget recommendations also include \$62.4 billion in advance appropriation for health care for fiscal year 2016.

The budget's authors expressed concern with the level of investment in the VA's information technology infrastructure and the government breakdown in the appropriations process.

Once considered a sacred cow, spending for veterans has been a flashpoint in recent months as federal deficits from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and skyrocketing benefit costs have compelled lawmakers to consider the issue.

A bipartisan budget deal in De-

cember cut military pensions, causing an uproar that led lawmakers to reconsider; however, they indicated the current rate of growth for military pay and benefits is unsustainable.

Last month, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., introduced sweeping veterans legislation covering changes to the GI Bill, survivor benefits, advanced appropriations for the VA and fertility treatments for wounded veterans. The response was largely positive and was backed by 20 veterans' service organizations, including Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and Disabled American Veterans.

For more information, visit www.independentbudget.org.

burke.matt@stripes.com

Boehner: Speaker's effort a departure from past standoffs on debt ceiling

FROM FRONT PAGE

"Right now, Jesus, himself, couldn't be the speaker and get 218 Republicans behind something, so I think Speaker Boehner is trying his best to come up with a plan that can get close to that," said Rep. Patrick Tiberi, R-Ohio, a longtime Boehner ally. "Whatever we move, there will be critics everywhere, but at the end of the day, we still have to govern."

The cuts to the cost-of-living allowance are set to go into effect in January 2016, and would cap benefit increases at 1 percent below inflation for military retirees younger than 62. Critics have said the cuts will cost a typical enlisted member who retires at 40 about \$83,000 over 20 years, and will cost a typical retired officer more than \$124,000 over 20 years.

This week, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew said the government will run short of cash to pay its bills by the end of the month unless Congress grants additional credit authority.

Outside the House chamber Wednesday night, the plan was gaining momentum, with dozens of GOP members saying they could back it. The benefits for retired military personnel were reduced in last year's bipartisan budget agreement, which cut \$6 billion in payments to veterans during the next 10 years.

"I'd support it in a heartbeat," said Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo. "We need to figure this thing out, and that's a way to do it." According to two people present, Boehner argued that the military-benefits maneuver could force some Democrats to join Republicans and also could win support from conservatives, who have voiced frustration with the reductions in payouts for retired military personnel.

Boehner's approach — moving toward a possible tweak to fed-



J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, walks to a strategy meeting Tuesday with fellow Republicans before speaking to reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington.

eral pension funding — signals a departure from past debt-ceiling standoffs, in which Republicans frequently have demanded sweeping conservative measures in exchange for extensions. It also underscores Boehner's desire to avoid a partisan standoff with the White House ahead of the mid-term elections.

In recent years, debt-ceiling debates have been a chance for House Republicans to try to lever-

age concessions from the White House and Senate Democrats in the ongoing battle of spending and deficit control. But after October's government shutdown, many in the House say they have little appetite for another standstill. Some members say they just want to get it behind them.

Even tea party favorites are giving Boehner room to pursue options considered less than optimal by House conservatives.

"There is a pragmatism here," said Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn. "You've got to know when to hold them and when to fold them. My assessment is that most of us don't think it's the time to fight."

Several Democratic aides, who requested anonymity in order to discuss internal matters, said House Democratic leaders probably will balk if Boehner moves ahead with the plan because

Democrats have insisted that they will not negotiate over the debt ceiling. But they did not rule out the possibility of some Democrats supporting such legislation amid the clamor in both parties to restore the cuts.

This week, aides to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said the Senate soon will bring forward its own legislation to restore the veterans' benefit cuts, taking up a spending bill authored by Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., the chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee. House Republican aides said Reid's overlap with Boehner's potential plan is helpful, especially as Republican leaders look for a debt-limit demand that could win Democratic votes.

But the House GOP's path is far from settled, in spite of Wednesday's turn toward a new proposal. On Monday, House Republicans, in informal whip counts taken by the leadership, rejected the two previous options for the debt-limit discussions. Those measures had mixed support, and the new military-benefits pitch will face similar challenges, with the House's conservative bloc uneasy with any legislation that extends the borrowing limit.

One key concern raised late Wednesday by House Republicans: making sure a restoration of benefits is balanced by cuts to other federal programs, in order to not have the measure be cast as a spending increase by watchdog conservative groups that are closely watching Boehner's play book. There also have been grumbles about whether a change to the budget deal would violate the carefully crafted terms hashed out in December by Congress' budget chairs, Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash.

Stars and Stripes contributed to this report.

MILITARY



GUSTAVO BAHENA/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Stryker vehicles of the 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 7th Infantry Division, are lined up Jan. 15 prior to training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.

Units learn to face enemy, faltering vehicles

By ADAM ASHTON

The (Tacoma, Wash.) News Tribune

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — Lt. Tyler Tessman awoke in the desert one day this week with two problems.

He had to rethink a tough training mission that stacked the odds against his Stryker platoon.

And he had to consider the possibility that his team might be grounded before he could even start on the battle plan.

Three of the four Stryker vehicles in his platoon from Joint Base Lewis-McChord were immobilized — one from too many burst tires, one from a broken axle and one from an assortment of safety issues that made it undrivable.

His predicament is familiar to Stryker soldiers since they returned to their base south of Tacoma from Afghanistan a year ago. They're working the kinks out of aging vehicles while preparing for a new kind of mission, one that will call on the eight-wheeled Strykers to face formidable armies instead of the elusive insurgencies of the past dozen years of fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The training has unfolded this month as the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division goes through exercises at the National Training Center in the Mojave Desert. Keeping their Stryker machines in the field is no small challenge when they're driving over jagged rocks and rough terrain.

"We popped a tire. No kidding. You're driving over volcanic rock.

You're going to pop a tire," said Maj. Adam Latham, the executive officer for the brigade's 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment.

The 3rd Brigade, the Army's original Stryker brigade, has some of the oldest Strykers in the military. The brigade took the vehicles to Iraq three times, but left them at home for its last deployment to Afghanistan in 2011-12.

During that Afghanistan mission, the brigade's 300-some Strykers sat in outdoor motor pools for extended periods of time. Some gathered water in the rain.

They didn't get a full-on outdoors test until October, when the brigade visited the Yakima Training Center to gear up for this month's exercise in Southern California. Yakima revealed the maintenance flaws many of the brigade's Strykers built up in their year of little use.

At one point in Yakima, fewer than half of the Strykers in the cavalry squadron were considered ready for combat, said squadron chief mechanic Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ric Minton, 31, of Olympia.

He and his team "didn't sleep for three days" to get the squadron's readiness rate back up to 90 percent, he said.

Spending constraints further crimped the brigade as it prepared for its Yakima exercise during the October government shutdown. The unit could not buy essential replacement parts until the spending restrictions were lifted.

"When we got the parts, our operational readiness levels came

up to standard," said Maj. Dennis Fajardo, the brigade's logistics officer.

Minton said the Strykers were in good shape when they hit the ground at Fort Irwin in early January. The Army sent the machines by train from Lewis-McChord to the desert base. About 10 of the cavalry squadron's 69 Strykers were down for repairs early this week.

"These trucks have been ripped apart and put back together four times" in the past year, with each "rip" representing a maintenance overhaul, Minton said.

This month, the Lewis-McChord soldiers are doing an exercise that simulates how they would operate if they were called upon to restore a border of an American ally that lost territory to a well-armed neighbor.

The soldiers do not have the forward bases they used as logistical hubs in Iraq and Afghanistan, where well-stocked mechanics could get vehicles moving again. They're sleeping in Strykers, and their only replacement parts are the ones they brought with them.

As a result, soldiers are learning "to appreciate the maintenance and sustainment of equipment," brigade Commander Col. Dave Bair said.

"What do you do when equipment like this breaks and you're in contact with the enemy and you have 30 kilometers to go?" he said.

Out in the field, Tessman's platoon had one Stryker that was

'Fighting the Strykers'



DAVID ALBANO/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

The 3rd Brigade took Stryker vehicles to Iraq three times, but left them at home during a deployment to Afghanistan in 2011-12.

completely nonoperational. The platoon towed it from site to site.

Another vehicle lost three tires on a training mission this week. One more broke its axle on a late-night mountaintop mission and had to limp home.

"It seems like we're fighting the Strykers and then fighting the enemy," one of his soldiers said as they discussed the damage and the time they spent repairing vehicles.

Tessman got out in the field the next day in part by taking tires from the completely immobilized Stryker and reusing them on the machine that notched the three blowouts. His platoon borrowed a Stryker from another unit to round out an operational team for that day.

It made for hard work first thing in the morning. Each tire weighs more than 200 pounds.

Latham, the cavalry execu-

tive officer, said 96 percent of the squadron's vehicles were ready for combat before Tessman's mission. Losing a couple of Strykers brought down that number, but learning how to fix them with limited resources was an important lesson, he said.

"This is a full-contact sport, and it's a full-contact sport for the vehicles, too," he said.

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MILITARY

UK officials back off push for scrutiny of US

By ADAM L. MATHIS
Stars and Stripes

LONDON – British legislators seeking greater oversight of U.S. bases in England withdrew on Wednesday their amendments to the Defence Reform Bill in the face of government opposition.

The amendments' supporters said they might press the issue again when the bill enters the review stage in the House of Lords, but seemed satisfied that the initial debate drew attention to the issues of U.S. drone operations and intelligence-gathering.

The amendments would have created scrutiny groups to oversee visiting forces in the United Kingdom. The groups would report to Parliament about various issues, including those regarding possible restrictions on foreign forces in the U.K.

The amendments also would have required the interception of communications commissioner to make reports about visiting forces' use of U.K. premises and property.

Though Lord Robin Hodgson, the mover of the amendments, withdrew the proposals after the government expressed its opposition, he said he was not satisfied by their arguments. He said the government had failed to address the country's possible collaboration in U.S. drone strikes conducted in anticipated self-defense.

"We have not addressed the question of anticipatory self-defense and whether we are providing means of collaboration with our allies, whoever they may be and who believe that anticipatory self-defense is OK, in things that would be unlawful under U.K. law," Hodgson said in the Grand Committee meeting.

Supporters of the amendments also expressed concern about U.S. intelligence operations in the U.K. Baroness Susan Miller of Chalthorpe Downer cited a 2004 committee that called for an investigation into RAF Menwith Hill, a National Intelligence Agency base, but no inquiry was conducted.

"There is a long history of Parliament being left in ignorance on

this issue," Miller said. "I do not know the reason for that. Was it because secretaries of state did not know what was going on there or chose not to let Parliament know?"

The amendments were opposed by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Ministry of Defence, who described them as "onerous and unnecessary." Visiting forces, he said, are not be-

yond the reach of U.K. law.

Addressing Menwith Hill specifically, he said operations at the base are conducted with "the knowledge and consent" of the government.

"Oversight and accountability of RAF Menwith Hill must continue to remain the responsibility of the Intelligence and Security Committee, and the formation of a separate scrutiny group is not

required," said Lord John Astor, of Hever.

Astor denied that U.S. bases in the country were operating drones.

"The U.S. Air Force does not operate remotely piloted aircraft systems from the United Kingdom, and neither does the U.K. provide remotely piloted aircraft systems support to bases of the United States' visiting forces," he

said.

Baroness Vivien Stern, another backer of the amendments, said after the committee meeting that legislative moves like these were "to get more publicity inside Parliament and outside" about the issues.

The bill is still in the committee stage and will be considered again on Tuesday.

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ADAM L. MATHIS/Stars and Stripes

Concerns about American intelligence-gathering at RAF Menwith Hill, England, prompted lawmakers to call for more oversight of visiting forces.

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PACIFIC

North's nukes frame strategy of US, S. Korea drills

BY ASHLEY ROWLAND
AND YO KYONG CHANG
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — The U.S. and South Korea will employ a new "tailored deterrence" strategy that targets the North Korean nuclear threat during annual military drills this spring, according to South Korean defense officials.

A spokesman for the South Korean Defense Ministry on Thursday described the new strategy as responding more "concretely" to nuclear threats and weapons of mass destruction.

The bilateral strategy, agreed to by the U.S. and South Korea last fall, is still in the conceptual stage and will be refined during the spring exercises, which will include rehearsals of nuclear crisis scenarios, a second ministry official said, speaking on customary condition of anonymity.

The U.S. and South Korea have yet to announce the dates for the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle exercises, which could begin as soon as late February and typically run through March and April. Tensions on the peninsula are already mounting as the drills approach.

North Korean officials on Thursday accused the U.S. of deploying B-52 bombers to conduct nuclear strike practices aimed at the North, Reuters news agency reported. U.S. Forces Korea did not immediately comment on the allegation.

Just a day after the two Koreas agreed to hold reunions of family separated by the Korean War, Pyongyang threatened to scrap those if South Korea proceeds with the exercises, according to media reports.

"Dialogue and exercises of war of aggression cannot go hand in hand," Pyongyang's National Defense Commission said in a statement aired on the radio, according to Yonhap News.

During an October news conference in Seoul, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel described the new strategy as a deterrent "against the threat of North Korean nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction."

"This will create a strategic policy-level framework within the alliance for deterring these specific threats and help us work together more seamlessly to maximize the effects of our deterrence," he said, according to a transcript.

Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin said at the time that agreement on the strategy would "greatly enhance ... our citizens' trust toward U.S. commitment to provide extended defense."

North Korea about-face on reunions

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea threatened Thursday to cancel reunions of Korean War-divided families because of upcoming U.S.-South Korean military drills and accused the United States of raising tensions by flying nuclear-capable B-52 bombers near the Korean Peninsula.

The apparent about-face a day after the rival Koreas agreed on dates for the emotional meetings fits a pattern analysts describe of North Korea agreeing to things South Korea covets and then pulling back until it gets what it wants — in this case a ratcheting down of massive military drills by Seoul and Washington that are seen as a huge drain on the impoverished North's military.

The rival Koreas decided Wednesday to resume the family reunions, which haven't been held since 2010, on Feb. 20-25.

On Thursday, the North's powerful National Defense Commission warned that the reunions may not happen if South Korea goes ahead with the drills.

It said U.S. B-52 bombers conducted nuclear strike drills targeting the North on Wednesday. The U.S. Pacific Command wouldn't confirm the claim but said it has maintained a strategic bomber presence in the region for years.

Despite the North's threat, South Korea said the drills will go ahead as scheduled.

The Associated Press

The Defense Ministry said Thursday that to monitor for nuclear or missile activity in the North, Seoul hopes to purchase five satellites by early 2020, though the purchase must be approved by the National Assembly. The U.S. and South Korea also plan to enact an early warning system that increases oversight of the North's nuclear activities, a ministry spokesman said.

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JOSHUA HAMMOND/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

In this composite panoramic image made from three digital photographs, the amphibious transport dock ship USS Denver, which will be decommissioned later this year, conducts an underway replenishment.

USS Denver to be replaced in '15

BY ERIK SLAVIN
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Denver, the Navy's second-oldest active ship, will be decommissioned later this year and eventually replaced by the USS Green Bay at Sasebo Naval Base in Japan, officials announced Thursday.

Two Sasebo-based mine countermeasures ships will also be swapped with upgraded replacements as part of the Navy's ongoing work to bring much of its most advanced equipment to the Asia-Pacific region.

The USS Denver, an amphibious transport dock ship, will depart Sasebo for Pearl Harbor this summer, when it will end its active service. The USS Green Bay, a San-Antonio class amphibious ship commissioned in 2009, will arrive at Sasebo in February 2015, according to a Navy statement.

The Green Bay's upgrades

over the Denver include its command-and-control suite, as well as increased lift and carrying capability via landing craft and the Marine Corps' Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft, Navy officials said.

Prior to the Green Bay's arrival, the USS Peleliu will support 7th Fleet operations in the Pacific.

The Austin-class USS Denver, the third ship to bear its name, had its keel laid in Seattle in 1964. Only the wood-hulled USS Constitution first launched in 1797, is older among active ships.

Meanwhile, the Avenger-class minehunters the USS Pioneer and the USS Chief are scheduled to arrive at Sasebo in May. They will replace the USS Avenger and the USS Defender, which were the first two ships of their class. The departing ships will be heavy-lifted to San Diego and decommissioned.

The ship changes will not affect base facilities or necessitate major relocations of sailors, officials

said.

The changes come less than a month after the Navy announced that the USS Ronald Reagan, one of the fleet's newest aircraft carriers, would replace the USS George Washington at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, in summer 2015.

Prior to that, the Navy swapped out the amphibious assault ship USS Essex and replaced it with the newer USS Bonhomme Richard. Several aging aircraft operating in the Western Pacific have also been upgraded with newer models.

Both the Obama administration and the Pentagon view the Asia-Pacific region as their highest long-term security priority. In recent years, threats from North Korea and maritime conflicts between China and multiple U.S. allies over ownership of islands in western Pacific waters have led to increased tensions in the region.

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MILITARY

NATO confirms military dog missing in Afghanistan

By MATT MILLHAM
Stars and Stripes

A NATO spokesman confirmed Thursday that a military working dog went missing in Afghanistan in December, lending some credence to a Taliban claim that it had captured a NATO dog and weapons just before Christmas.

"We can confirm that a military working dog went missing following an ISAF mission in December, 2013," Army Lt. Col. Will Griffin wrote in an email to Stars and Stripes. "It is ISAF policy to defer identification to the appropriate national authorities."

A purported Taliban video that surfaced this week features five bearded men and one very nervous-looking dog outfitted with a fancy harness similar to those

worn by canines that accompany U.S. Special Forces.

Griffin said he cannot confirm the video's authenticity.

It's impossible to tell from the tape whether the scared animal is an actual military working dog or just made up to look like one, though the video goes on to provide more evidence to back the Taliban's claims.

The video's star, a man in a shalwar khamaz, shows off what looks to be a broken U.S. military assault rifle, possibly an M4 or M14, and a tricked-out M4 with some high-tech sights and other gear, all of which point to — but do not prove — U.S. origins.

He also pulls out some grenades that look like the standard M67 models carried by American ground pounders.

Interestingly, both of the assault rifles look to be fitted with suppressors, devices that reduce the noise and flash of firing. Those devices aren't common among conventional forces, but are used by some American Special Forces and snipers.

According to the Taliban, they captured the dog and weapons when NATO forces attacked their compound in Alingar district in late December 2013.

A Dec. 23 news release from the Taliban said that they had capture weapons, but there was no mention of a dog until an updated version of the release was posted with the video.

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A NATO spokesman confirmed Thursday that a military working dog went missing in Afghanistan in December, lending some credence to this purported Taliban video that surfaced this week. It features five bearded men and a dog outfitted with a harness similar to those worn by canines that accompany U.S. Special Forces soldiers.

Air Force sets date for early retirement board meeting

By JON HARPER
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Air Force will convene an Enhanced Selective Early Retirement Board on June 16 to consider early retirement for eligible officers, according to the Air Force Personnel Center.

The ESERB is a new authority granted to the Air Force in the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act to enable the service to meet force reduction and manpower goals.

The ESERB applies to:

- Active-duty colonels who meet the following criteria: are a line officer, biomedical sciences corps, or medical services corps personnel; who served at least two years of active duty in grade as of June 16, whose designated Competitive Category and Air Force Specialty Code meet eligibility requirements (All 11X, All 12X, 13B, 13C, 13M, 13N, 13S, 14N, 15W, 17D, 21M, 21R, 31P, 32E, 38P, and 71S; all AFSCs of the biomedical sciences corps; and all AFSCs of the medical services corps); whose names aren't on a promotion list; who haven't been approved for voluntary retirement; who are not to be involuntarily retired under any provision of law during FY14 or FY15; who were not previously considered in the 2010, 2012 or 2013 Selective Early Retirement Boards.

- Active-duty lieutenant colonels who are retirement eligible biomedical sciences corps personnel who have been once non-selected for promotion to the next higher grade.

- Active-duty majors who are retirement-eligible line of the

Air Force, nurse corps, biomedical sciences corps, and medical services corps personnel.

The ESERB will affect 956 colonels, 11 lieutenant colonels, and 1,019 majors, according to the Air Force.

The ESERB only applies to the active-duty force, not the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve.

Eligible colonels who don't want to meet the ESERB can apply for voluntary retirement until Feb. 25.

They can also use other force management programs to enable them to retire with an effective date no later than Jan. 1, 2015.

However, eligible officers who use other programs to retire voluntarily could be required to repay the Air Force for benefits received, such as their transferred Post 9/11 GI Bill benefits. Officers selected for retirement by the ESERB won't have to repay those benefits, according to the Air Force.

If they're voluntary retirement request is approved by March 18, eligible colonels won't have to meet the ESERB, according to an Air Force memo.

Lieutenant colonels and majors who apply for voluntary retirement after May 16 will remain ESERB eligible and will still have to meet the board.

Eligible lieutenant colonels and majors whose retirement dates are approved before June 14 won't meet the ESERB, according to an Air Force news release.

The ESERB will be held at Joint Base-Randolph in San Antonio.

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NATION

Keeping a close watch on eyes in the sky

By CRAIG TIMBERG
The Washington Post

Shooter and victim were just a pair of pixels, dark specks on a gray streetscape. Hair color, bullet wounds, even the weapon were not visible in the series of pictures taken from an airplane flying two miles above.

But what the images revealed — to a degree impossible just a few years ago — was location, mapped over time. Second by second, they showed a gang assembling, blocking off access points, sending the shooter to meet his target and taking flight after the body hit the pavement. When the report reached police, it included a picture of the blue stucco building into which the killer ultimately retreated, at last beyond the view of the powerful camera overhead.

"I've witnessed 34 of these," said Ross McNutt, the president of Persistent Surveillance Systems, which collected the images of the killing in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, from a specially outfitted Cessna. "It's like opening up a murder mystery in the middle, and you need to figure out what happened before and after."

As Americans have grown increasingly comfortable with traditionally surveillance cameras, a new, far more powerful generation is being quietly deployed that can track every vehicle and person across an area the size of a small city, for several hours at a time. Though these cameras can't read license plates or see faces, they provide such a wealth of data that police, businesses, even private individuals can use them to help identify people and track their movements.

Already, the cameras have been flown above major public events, such as the Ohio political rally where Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., named Sarah Palin as his running mate in 2008, McNutt said. They've been flown above Baltimore; Philadelphia; Compton, Calif.; and Dayton in demonstrations for police. They've also been used for traffic impact studies, for security at NASCAR races and at the request of a Mexican politician, who commissioned the flights over Ciudad Juarez.

Civil liberty concerns

Defense contractors are developing similar technology for the military, but its potential for civilian use is raising novel civil liberty concerns. In Dayton, where Persistent Surveillance Systems is based, city officials liked last year when police considered paying for 200 hours of flights, in part because of privacy complaints.

"There are an infinite number of surveillance technologies that would help solve crimes ... but there are reasons that we don't do those things, or shouldn't be doing those things," said Joel Preece, a University of Dayton post-doctoral fellow in human rights who



Ty Wright/The Washington Post

Persistent Surveillance Systems analyst Elizabeth Dils, at the company's command center in Dayton, Ohio, scrutinizes video footage of traffic patterns.



McNutt

opposed the plan. "You know where there's a lot less crime? There's a lot less crime in China."

McNutt, a retired Air Force officer who

once helped design a similar system for the skies above Fallujah, a key battleground city in Iraq, hopes to win over officials in Dayton and elsewhere by convincing them that cameras mounted on fixed-wing aircraft can provide far more useful intelligence than police helicopters do, for less money. The Supreme Court generally has given wide latitude to police using aerial surveillance so long as the photography captures images visible to the naked eye.

A single camera mounted atop the Washington Monument could deter crime all around the National Mall, McNutt said. He thinks regular flights over the most dangerous parts of Washington — combined with publicity about how much police could now see — would make a significant dent in the number of burglaries, robberies and murders. His 192-megapixel cameras would spot as many as 50 crimes per six-hour flight, he estimates, providing police with a continuous stream of images covering more than a third of the city.

"We watch 25 square miles, so you see lots of crimes," he said. "And, by the way, after people commit crimes, they drive like idiots."

A crime deterrent

What McNutt is trying to sell is not merely the latest technology for police. He envisions such steep drops in crime that they will bring substantial side effects, including rising property values, better schools, increased development and, eventually, lower incarceration rates as the reality of long-term overhead surveillance deters those tempted to commit crimes.

Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl, a supporter of McNutt's efforts, has even proposed inviting the public to visit the operations center, to get a glimpse of the technology in action.

"I want them to be worried that we're watching," he said. "I want them to be worried that they never know when we're overhead."

McNutt, a suburban father of four with a doctorate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is not deaf to concerns about his company's ambitions. Unlike many of the giant defense contractors that are eagerly repurposing wartime surveillance technology for domestic use, he sought advice from the American Civil Liberties Union in writing a privacy policy.

It has rules on how long data can be kept, when images can be accessed and by whom. Police are supposed to begin looking at the pictures only after a crime has been reported. Pure fishing expeditions are prohibited.

The technology has inherent limitations as well. From the airborne cameras, each person appears as a single pixel indistinguishable from any other per-

son. What they are doing — even whether they are clothed or not — is impossible to see. As camera technology improves, McNutt said he intends to increase their range, not the precision of the imagery, so larger areas can be monitored.

The notion that McNutt and his roughly 40 employees are peeping Toms clearly rankles. They made a PowerPoint presentation for the ACLU that includes pictures taken to aid the response to Hurricane Sandy and the severe Iowa floods last summer. The section is titled: "Good People Doing Good Things."

"We get a little frustrated when people get so worried about us seeing them in their back yard," McNutt said in his operation center, where the walls are adorned with 120-inch monitors, each showing a different grainy urban scene collected from above.

"We can't even see what they are doing in their backyard. And, by the way, we don't care."

Yet in a world of increasingly pervasive surveillance, location and identity are becoming all but inextricable — one quickly leads to the other for those with the right tools.

Court-imposed limits

Courts have put stricter limits on technology that can see things not visible to the naked eye, ruling that they can amount to unconstitutional searches when conducted without a warrant.

But the lines remain fuzzy as courts struggle to apply old precedents — from a single overflight carrying an officer armed with nothing stronger than a telephoto

lens, for example — to the rapidly advancing technology.

"If you turn your country into a totalitarian surveillance state, there's always some wrongdoing you can prevent," said Jay Stanley, a privacy expert with the American Civil Liberties Union. "The balance struck in our constitution tilts toward liberty, and I think we should keep that value."

Police and private businesses have invested heavily in video surveillance since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. Though academics still debate whether the cameras create significantly lower crime rates, an overwhelming majority of Americans support them. A Washington Post poll in November found that only 14 percent of those surveyed wanted fewer cameras in public spaces.

Dayton police were enticed by McNutt's offer to fly 200 hours over the city for a hometown discount price of \$120,000. The city, with about 140,000 people, saw its police force shrink from more than 400 officers to about 350 in recent years, and there is little hope of reinforcements.

Still, the proposed contract, coming during Dayton's campaign season and amid a wave of revelations about National Security Agency surveillance, sparked resistance. Biehl is looking for a chance to revive the matter. But the new mayor, Nan Whaley, has reservations, both because of the cost and the potential loss of privacy.

"Since 2001, we haven't had really healthy conversations about personal liberty," Whaley said. "It's starting to bloom about a decade too late. I think the conversation needs to continue."

NATION



RICH PEDRONCELLI/AP

A warning buoy sits on the dry, cracked bed of Lake Mendocino near Ukiah, Calif., on Tuesday.

Calif. town's water shortage stokes fears

By JASON DEAREN
The Associated Press

WILLITS, Calif. — In this small logging town in Northern California's redwood country, small blue signs urging water conservation are almost everywhere you look.

Just south of Willits, in one of the state's most verdant corners, crows and other birds peck at dry ground that should be covered in water at the city's Centennial Reservoir, which is less than a third full. The creek that feeds it has slowed to a trickle.

"It's common at this time of year for the water to be going over the cement wall right here," said Bruce Burton, a Willits city councilman, gesturing toward the small cement dam in the creek. "In fact, we'd be standing in water. In the 20 years I've been in local government, we've never experienced this kind of condition."

While rain is predicted through the weekend in the northern and central parts of the state, California remains in the midst of a historic drought. The state's Department of Public Health says 17 rural areas including Willits — a town of about 5,000 that usually sees about 50 inches of rain per year — are dangerously low on water, and officials expect that number to grow.

In addition to declaring a drought emergency, California has canceled water deliveries from the state's water system to farms and thirsty cities and has shut down fishing in dozens of streams to protect imperiled salmon and steelhead.

The emergency has become a disruption to everyday life in Willits, a Mendocino County locale known as the final resting place of the racehorse Seabiscuit. City leaders have banned lawn watering and car washing, have mandated all residents cut water use dramatically and have asked restaurants to serve the precious resource only upon request and to conserve, such as by using paper plates.

While California sees cycles of drought normally, scientists say the dry weather since Oct. 1 appears to be unique in its severity.

"According to tree ring records, this year, which began Oct. 1, really stands out as one of the

worst single years in the last 500 years," said Lynn Ingram, author of "The West Without Water" and a University of California earth science professor.

"This year, the drought is impacting places more than we've ever seen, at least that I've come across in my research," she said.

Of the 17 water-starved rural agencies, three are in rainy Mendocino County and are districts that rely largely on rainwater to fill their reservoirs. Other areas include parts of Fresno, Kern and Santa Cruz counties.

After a record dry 2013, Mendocino County leaders were the first in California to declare a drought emergency, which they did on Jan. 7.

Things are so scarce that the sheriff's office is on alert for water bandits. During the 2009-10 drought, authorities caught thieves pumping water from Lake Mendocino into trucks. The reservoir is currently about 37 percent full, according to county officials.

"Water theft is a big concern, so we're doing public announcements and have a line to call for reports to the sheriff's department," said Carre Brown, a Mendocino County supervisor. "All deputies are on the watch."

Unlike many of the other communities facing water woes, Willits doesn't have readily accessible groundwater.

Officials are racing to develop two groundwater wells within city limits, but the water in both sources is polluted by naturally occurring arsenic and other minerals, so the city needs an expensive treatment facility to make it potable. The state public health department is testing the water to help determine what kind of treatment is needed.

Ron Owens, a spokesman for the state public health department, said officials are helping struggling towns like Willits identify other water options, like connecting with other water systems if need be. It also has some emergency funding available.

Meantime, officials say people in the bucolic town seem to be following the mandatory conservation orders.

Even the local coin-operated car wash is offering only recycled water.

Storm leaves hundreds of thousands in the dark

By MICHAEL RUBINKAM
AND JOANN LOVIGLIO
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Utility crews were working feverishly to restore power to hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses in the eastern U.S. that were still in the dark and cold Thursday after an ice storm knocked out electricity to more than 1 million customers, damage one official likened to that from a hurricane.

The Northeast's second winter storm of the week dumped more than a foot of snow in some states on Wednesday, forcing schools, businesses and government offices to close, snarling air travel and sending cars and trucks sliding on slippery roads and highways — an all-too-familiar litany of misery in a winter where the storms seem to be tripping over

each other.

What made this one stand out — and caused all those outages — was the thick coating of ice left on trees and power lines. While the storm has long since cleared out, its effects are expected to linger for days.

"People are going to have to have some patience at this point," Gov. Tom Corbett said Wednesday, warning that an overnight refreeze could cause more problems on the roads Thursday. The governor issued a disaster emergency proclamation, freeing up state agencies to use all available resources and personnel.

At its height, the storm knocked out power to nearly 849,000 customers in Pennsylvania, most of them in the counties around Philadelphia. Though sizeable, it's still less than the nearly 1.8 mil-

lion who were left without power after Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

PECO, southeastern Pennsylvania's dominant utility, warned it could be until the weekend before the lights come back on for all of its more than 431,000 customers without power Thursday morning. FirstEnergy was reporting almost 49,000 customers without power, while PPL was reporting more than 20,000.

In neighboring Maryland, where 76,000 customers were in the dark, power companies gave a restoration estimate of Friday. More than 7,000 New Jersey customers also lacked electricity.

Officials pleaded with people not to use generators or gas grills indoors to avoid 20 to 25 people in the Philadelphia area were taken to hospitals with carbon monoxide poisoning.

NC river turns to sludge after ash spill

By MICHAEL BIESECKER
The Associated Press

ON THE DAN RIVER, N.C. — Canoe guide Brian Williams dipped his paddle downstream from where thousands of tons of coal ash has been spewing for days into the Dan River, turning the wooden blade flat to bring up a lump of gray sludge.

On the riverbank, hundreds of workers at a Duke Energy power plant in North Carolina scrambled to plug a hole in a pipe at the bottom of a 27-acre pond where

the toxic ash was stored.

Since the leak was first discovered by a security guard Sunday afternoon, Duke estimates up to 82,000 tons of ash mixed with 27 million gallons of contaminated water has spilled into the river. Officials at the nation's largest electricity provider say they cannot provide a timetable for when the leak will be fully contained, though the flow has lessened significantly as the pond has emptied.

An Associated Press reporter canoed downstream of the spill at the Dan River Steam Station and

saw gray sludge several inches deep, coating the riverbank for more than 2 miles. The Dan had crested overnight, leaving a distinctive, gray line that contrasted with the brown bank like a dirty ring on a bathtub.

Environmental regulators in North Carolina say they are still awaiting test results to determine if there is any hazard to people or wildlife. Coal ash is known to contain a witch's brew of toxic chemicals, including lead, arsenic, mercury and radioactive uranium.

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NATION

Man-in-undies statue causes stir at college

The Associated Press

WELLESLEY, Mass. — A remarkably lifelike sculpture of a man sleepwalking in nothing but his underpants has made some Wellesley College students a bit uncomfortable, but the president of the prestigious women's school says that's all part of the intellectual process.

The sculpture titled "Sleep-walker" — of a man in an eyes-closed, zombie-like trance — is part of an exhibit by sculptor Tony Matelli at the college's Davis Museum. It was placed at a busy area of campus Monday and prompted an online student petition to have it removed.

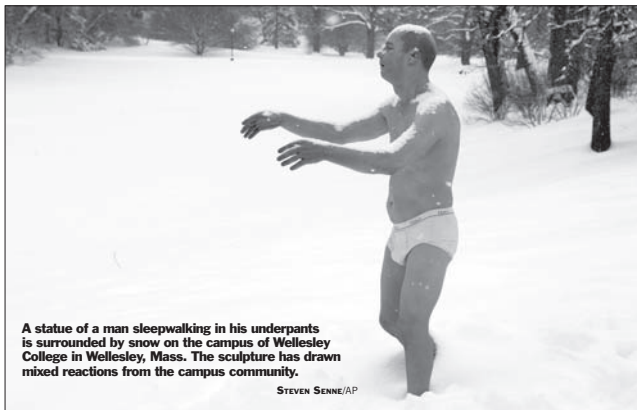
The sculpture is a "source of

apprehension, fear, and triggering thoughts regarding sexual assault" for many, according to the petition, which had nearly 300 signees Wednesday.

The petition started by junior Zoe Magid called on President H. Kim Bottomly to have the artwork removed.

That appeared unlikely, according to a joint statement issued Wednesday by Bottomly and museum director Lisa Fischman.

"The very best works of art have the power to stimulate deeply personal emotions and to provoke unexpected new ideas, and this sculpture is no exception," the statement said. The sculpture "has started an impassioned conversation about art, gender, sexuality



A statue of a man sleepwalking in his underpants is surrounded by snow on the campus of Wellesley College in Wellesley, Mass. The sculpture has drawn mixed reactions from the campus community.

STEVEN SENNE/AP

and individual experience, both on campus and on social media."

The sculpture was placed outdoors specifically to get a reaction and to connect the indoor exhibition with the world beyond, Fischman said.

"I love the idea of art escaping the museum and muddling the line between what we expect to be inside (art) and what we expect to

be outside (life)," she wrote.

Reaction from the campus community was mixed.

Freshman Bridget Schreiner told The Boston Globe she was "freaked out" the first time she saw the sculpture, thinking for a moment that a real, nearly naked man was lingering on campus.

"This could be a trigger for students who have experienced

sexual assault," she said.

Others were more understanding.

"I find it disturbing, but in a good way," English professor Sarah Wall-Randell said. "I think it's meant to be off-putting. It's a schlumpy guy in underpants in an all-women environment."

The exhibit is open through July 20.

Fugitive at large 37 years captured

The Associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Police say Judy Lynn Hayman's luck ran out after 37 years on the run not because of an intense manhunt but rather two disparate factors: bad weather that kept an investigator at his desk and her distinctive eyes that had never changed since her mug shot was taken.

San Diego police arrested the 60-year-old woman Monday at her San Diego apartment after receiving a mug shot from Michigan, where an officer staying off icy roads sent fingerprint cards for all old escapes to the FBI.

Authorities had been searching for Hayman since she escaped from Ypsilanti prison in 1977. Hayman served eight months of an 18- to 24-month sentence for attempting to steal clothes from a Detroit-area store.

San Diego police say Hayman identified herself as Jamie Lewis and produced government documents with the name. Officers, however, remained suspicious because of inconsistencies in her story and her resemblance to an old Michigan mug shot they had.

"Her eyes gave her away," San Diego police Lt. Kevin Mayer said.

She acknowledged being Hayman after a police took her in, Mayer said.



Judy Lynn Hayman

It wasn't immediately clear how long Hayman had been in San Diego. Neighbors at her apartment complex said she lived in the building for almost seven years.

Her 32-year-old son was visiting when police arrived, and officers said he appeared stunned.

Neighbors said the woman they know as Jamie Lewis kept to herself, not speaking of her past.

Hayman is being held in a San Diego County jail awaiting extradition to Michigan and was scheduled to appear in court Thursday.

Michigan authorities want her returned to the state to complete her sentence for attempted larceny. She also could face a separate criminal charge for the escape.

Lt. Charles Levens, of the Michigan Corrections Department, who sent the fingerprint cards to the FBI, said many police agencies had fingerprints that matched Hayman's but under different names. He gave the information to one of his investigators, Tim Hardville, who tracked her down in San Diego.

"I said, 'Tim, you're going to get your girl here,'" Levens said. "There are two ways to get off our list: a death certificate or a (live) body. It's what the state pays us to do ... If you're a fugitive, you have an obligation to pay your debt to society."

FAA to examine airport towers following injury

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A lightning strike that injured an air traffic controller at Baltimore's main airport has exposed a potential vulnerability at airport towers during storms and is prompting Federal Aviation Administration officials to inspect hundreds of towers nationwide, The Associated Press has learned.

The FAA will look for problems with the lightning protection systems for airport towers, where air traffic controllers do the vital job of choreographing the landings and takeoffs of flights.

The FAA told the AP about the planned assessments of the towers' lightning protection systems after responding to a Freedom of Information Act request about the Sept. 12 lightning strike at the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport.

The FAA said in a statement that the accident was "the first of its kind in FAA history," and the agency plans on "assessing the condition" of lightning protection systems at the 440 air traffic control towers across the country.

Because of their height, airport towers have a greater chance of being struck by lightning, and

tower designers plan for the bolts. Towers are built with lightning rods and wiring to direct the electrical current from a strike harmlessly into the ground.

During the Sept. 12 thunderstorm, air traffic controller Edward Boyd, who was working in the tower, saw sparks and heard an electrical snap coming from a piece of equipment that controls runway lighting.

He turned on a generator to ensure the runway lighting stayed on. Boyd had his right hand on the generator switch when he saw lightning flash outside and felt a shock on his ring finger.

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NATION



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Soldiers rescue Michelangelo's Madonna and Child in Altaussee, Austria, in 1945.

Real 'monuments men' records on display in DC

By BRETT ZONGKER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — When art historians saw Paris fall to the Nazis in World War II, they immediately realized Europe's vast monuments, art, cathedrals and architecture were at risk and began mobilizing to protect such treasures.

In Washington, the newly opened National Gallery of Art became the U.S. museum world's epicenter for lobbying President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Allied forces in 1941 to prevent the destruction of Europe's monuments. Their efforts would create a corps of U.S. and British soldiers who worked to protect cultural sites and to recover looted art after the war.

Now for the first time, photographs, maps, correspondence and records — including lists of art amassed by Adolf Hitler and other Nazi leaders — from the corps of soldiers known as "monuments men" are going on display at the National Gallery of Art, an archives gallery at the Smithsonian's Donald W. Reynolds Center and the National Archives.

At the same time, George Clooney, Matt Damon and Cate Blanchett tell the story in "The Monuments Men" movie opening Friday, drawing new attention to the history. It's a story straight out of the nation's archives and art repositories from the records that real monuments men and women left behind.

One of them was George Leslie Stout, an art conservator at the Fogg Museum in Boston, who drafted a plan for a special military team to protect Europe's art

from Allied bombings. He even enlisted in the Navy with hopes of seeing his plan through. Leaders at the National Gallery of Art pressed the case with justices of the Supreme Court and the president, and their efforts led to the creation of the U.S. Army's Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Section.

Shortly before D-Day, Gen. Dwight Eisenhower issued an order for every field commander to guard irreplaceable sites as Allied troops invaded the European mainland to defeat Germany.

"Inevitably, in the path of our advance will be found historical monuments and cultural centers which symbolize to the world all that we are fighting to preserve," Eisenhower said in 1944. "It is the responsibility of every commander to protect and respect these symbols whenever possible."

Surrounded by the destruction of war, the monuments unit mapped important sites to save and later turned to recovering and returning stolen artwork — a change from the spoils-of-war practices of the past.

Personal papers from Stout and other "monuments men," including James Romirer and Walker Hancock, were later acquired by the Archives of American Art and the National Gallery. Filmmakers consulted the archives in making the movie, including some of the records now displayed, said Kate Haw, director of the Smithsonian's archive.

"The movie will make a great story, and then people can come learn the history by coming to us," she said.

Rarely seen images now on view at the Smithsonian's American Art

Museum show a garden sculpture at the Palace of Versailles draped in camouflage netting for protection, the Neuschwanstein Castle in Germany where the Nazis amassed stolen art and the rescue of Michelangelo's 1504 sculpture "Madonna and Child," which had been stolen from a church in Bruges, Belgium.

Among the documents on display are the records of art historian Rose Valland who spied on the Nazis at the Paris museum where she worked and kept notes on plundered art, as well as the personal inventory of art looted for Nazi leader Hermann Goering's personal collection.



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Medal of Honor Museum seeking \$11M from SC

By BRUCE SMITH
The Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Organizers of a \$100 million National Medal of Honor Museum on the South Carolina coast are asking state lawmakers to provide \$11 million for the project.

"This will bring great exposure to the state of South Carolina," retired Marine Maj. Gen. James Livingston, the state's only living Medal of Honor recipient, told a House budget subcommittee. "This will put us on the map in a way we are not now as a national and international location."

Plans for the museum at the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant were announced in 2012. The land is being leased to the museum by the state for 99 years for \$1 per year.

Livingston asked lawmakers to provide \$1 million in initial support and then \$2 million per year for five years. He said the project has been extensively studied and a business plan developed.

He added that the location on Charleston Harbor is fitting because the Medal of Honor was established during the Civil War, which began with the bom-

bardment of Fort Sumter in the harbor.

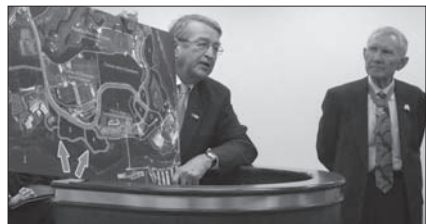
A master museum plan envisions, among other attractions, a uniform collection, a large-format theater where visitors can learn about sacrifices for freedom, a Great Hall honoring the recipients and an interactive media gallery where visitors can hear each recipient's story.

"Think about it as a place where young Americans or older Americans can come in the front door and come out re-energized about what we are as a people," Livingston said. "It's not about guns and uniforms. It's about a message to reinforce what we should be as a country."

State Rep. Chip Limehouse, the chairman of the subcommittee, said getting the money won't be easy. "That's a big ask, particularly in this budget year, but you don't get it if you don't ask," he said.

The state money would be added to funds raised through a nationwide fundraising campaign by the nonprofit National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation.

Livingston said there are only 76 surviving recipients of the nation's highest award for valor and only six are from World War II.



BRUCE SMITH/AP

Carlyle Blakeney, left, the vice chairman of the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation, and Medal of Honor recipient retired Marine Maj. Gen. James Livingston show South Carolina state lawmakers a map of the location for a planned Medal of Honor Museum on Tuesday in Columbia, S.C.

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NATION

Debbie Jurcak, a mother of three, selects a loaf of bread at the West Suburban Community Pantry in Woodridge, Ill., on Jan. 16.

MARTHA IRVINE/AP



A recent report from the Urban Institute found that, in an average month, there are still three times as many children living with parents who've been out of work more than six months as there were in 2007, before the recession hit. Illinois, where Debbie Jurcak and her family live, is among the states with the highest percentage of children in that predicament, with nearly 5 percent of them living with parents who are long-term unemployed, according to the report.

‘Long-term unemployed’

ONE MOTHER'S STORY

By MARTHA IRVINE
The Associated Press

AURORA, Ill. — Down the road from an emergency food pantry where a small crowd waits for the chance to gather free groceries, there is a church sign that reads: “If you need help, ask God. If you don’t, thank God.”

Debbie Jurcak, one of those in line, will tell you that it is indeed divine help — or, anyway, faith-based organizations — that she and her family have relied on in recent weeks. Late in December, the federal government ended her unemployment benefits, six months after she was laid off from an administrative job.

Having passed that six-month mark, she had joined the ranks of the “long-term unemployed,” a growing group of more than 1.3 million Americans for whom Congress recently declined to extend benefits. It is a label that Jurcak, a former teacher with two master’s degrees, never expected would apply to her.

“It’s not something you want to go around talking about all the time. I think a lot of people don’t share what the depth of their need is,” the mother of three said, wiping tears from underneath her glasses as she waited for her turn at the West Suburban Community Pantry, outside Chicago.

“But ... there’s no room for pride,” she said. “Because we all come to a point in our life — whether it’s financial reasons, or medical reasons, or mental health reasons, or whatever they are — where you recognize your need for help.”

Turns out, Jurcak, 43, is one of the lucky ones, or so she hopes. After months applying for jobs, she learned just days after her visit to the pantry, that she got a customer service job, which she started the last week of January. It’s only temporary for now and the pay is modest. But if she proves herself, there’s a good chance she’ll be hired permanently, she said.

Her husband, Frank, is working for a temp agency, driving a forklift or delivering documents for \$12 an hour. He, too, is awaiting word on a full-time job, his in law enforcement.

Permanent employment would mean major changes for this family and for their children.

Unable to cover January rent, the couple sought emergency aid from the Society of St. Vincent De Paul — an organization that regularly collects clothing and household donations from residents at their apartment complex. Their church plans to help them with February’s rent payment, bridging the gap from the loss of Jurcak’s unemployment benefits to her first paycheck.

Even before those benefits were cut off, the couple had sold many of their household belongings at secondhand shops to help pay the bills.

At the West Suburban Community Pantry, where Jurcak has gotten many of her groceries in recent months, workers say it’s not unusual to see unemployed professionals, including the occasional out-of-work CEO, even as the economy improves. And always, there are families.

One day, hopefully soon, Jurcak said, she vows to “pay it forward” and be the one to do the giving.

She also hopes members of Congress will find a way to reinstate long-term benefits, at least until the economy is stronger.

“I don’t want to rely on my government — and quite frankly, I’m not convinced that it’s really government’s role to do all that it is asked to do,” Jurcak said. “But it shouldn’t ignore the needs of the people either.”

Her voice shook when she said “ignore.”

“Maybe until you’re in the situation, you don’t really get it.”

“I think a lot of people don’t share what the depth of their need is.”

Debbie Jurcak
unemployed mother of three

WORLD

LOOKING UP

Boom in construction of high-rises, luxury homes to alter London's historic look

By DANICA KIRKA
The Associated Press

'London is in danger of becoming a sort of Abu Dhabi, a sort of Hong Kong.'

Nigel Barker
English Heritage

The face of London is about to change.

Dozens of buildings of 20 stories or more are under construction or planned along the south bank of the River Thames just upstream from Big Ben and the majestic dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. The development surge, fueled by wealthy foreigners looking for a safe place to invest, has spawned concern that the city is sacrificing its heritage for the sake of luxury homes.

"London is in danger of becoming a sort of Abu Dhabi, a sort of Hong Kong," warned Nigel Barker, of English Heritage, a body devoted to protecting the nation's inheritance.

London grows up

It's not that London lacks distinctive tall buildings: the 87-story Shard stabs the sky south of London Bridge, the 41-story Gherkin rises above the financial district, and soon there will be the 38-story Walkie Talkie, all of which earned their nicknames because of their unique shapes.

Critics are concerned about the sheer number of new projects — some 200 in various stages of consideration or construction, according to New London Architecture, an independent group studying development. Many of them are residential properties clustered along the south side of the Thames with views of the water and the architectural treasures across the river.

Unease about tall buildings in this city, which prides itself in having risen from the ashes of the Great Fire in 1666, isn't new. Architectural purists like Prince Charles, the heir to the throne, have long warned against skyscrapers.

Economic forces following the 2008 economic crisis have rekindled the con-

flict between development and conservation. While the government seeks to rein in the financial services industry, London continues to attract foreign money and wealthy expatriates, straining the city's Victorian-era infrastructure and widening the wealth gap.

The independent Smith Institute estimated in 2012 that investment in luxury homes was \$8.3 billion a year. In the two years through June 2013, foreign nationals bought 69 percent of the newly built homes that sold for more than 1 million pounds in London, according to an October report by Knight Frank, a London property adviser.

"It is a honeypot for global capital," said Peter Murray, chairman of New London Architecture. "So we're seeing pressures we've never experienced before. The movement of global capital is having a dramatic effect on how we plan the city."

Rooms with a view

As governments poured money into banks to save them during the financial crisis, rich people around the world sought safe places to park their money. Investors flocked to London because of the stability of Britain's government, the city's vibrancy and its tolerance for newcomers.

"We didn't know that the U.K. in general, and London in particular, would be seen as a safe haven for people all over the world," said Tony Travers, an expert on issues facing the capital at the London School of Economics. "Property in London was treated as an asset class that was safer than say, banks in Cyprus."

From 2007, just before the crisis, to

October 2013, house prices in London's most desirable neighborhoods rose sharply. In Kensington & Chelsea, home to Kensington Palace and Notting Hill, average prices rose 42 percent to 1.2 million pounds, according to the Smith Institute. In the City of Westminster, which hosts the Houses of Parliament, prices jumped 43 percent to 863,000 pounds.

Prices for newly built homes on the south bank of the river are even higher. A four-bedroom, 6,600 square-foot apartment in the 50-story Tower at St. George Wharf is being offered for 19.5 million pounds.

The place to be

The boom is also a reflection of London's attractiveness as one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities. With a population of 8.2 million, London boasts not just people from all corners of the former Empire, but everywhere else, too. There are more French citizens living in London, for example, than in Bordeaux. Then there are some 250,000 Americans.

Demand for housing has spurred development, with a dozen construction cranes jutting into the sky along the south bank of the river west of Westminster Bridge.

The work is part of a 15 billion-pound collection of projects known as Nine Elms, which promoters say

will create 16,000 new homes, 25,000 jobs and an "internationally significant business district" in the boroughs of Lambeth and Wandsworth.

Deputy mayor for planning Edward Lister said there's a strategic approach to protecting the city's skyline, with detailed policies making sure the right buildings are in the right place.

"What we can't do is try to impose some kind of freeze on the skyline and suspend the capital in stasis," he said.

Others aren't so sure about it all, among them UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, the moral overseer of sites of significance. It has expressed concern about development near the Houses of Parliament, fearing it will ruin the view from Westminster, and has urged authorities "to ensure that these proposals are not approved in their current form."

Should the committee ultimately put the site on its endangered list, it would be an embarrassment for Britain, which takes pride in safeguarding its national treasures.

Now you see it ...

Critics say the power of local councils to approve construction is leading to disconnected planning — even though city authorities have the final say. The city, critics complain, is being redesigned via mission creep, one skyscraper at a time.

That's a problem for people like Barker, who wants the city to look more closely at the overall picture and to remember that tourists — to say nothing of investors — come to see parks, squares, bell towers and palaces.

"London trades on its look more than other cities," he said.

He hopes there will be more awareness of the changes the city faces. Paul Hackett, the Smith Institute's director, argued local government decisions should face more scrutiny.

"There should be a public discussion," he said. "If there are 200 tall buildings planned, that's fine. But there should be a proper debate."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man dies after fight over jukebox music

NV LAS VEGAS — A Las Vegas man is accused of killing another man in a fist-fight after arguing with him about jukebox music at a bar.

Police arrested Luis Miguel Chavarin, 31, after the fight happened around 4 a.m. at the Loose Caboose on West Flamingo Road.

Chavarin told officers he was at the tavern with his friend when he started arguing with another man about the music on the jukebox, according to a police report. When the man started swearing at him, "pushing his buttons" and getting close, Chavarin said he feared a "sucker punch" and hit him.

When the victim hit the ground and went unconscious, Chavarin tried to help him, witnesses said. Chavarin told police he didn't intend to seriously hurt the man, and stayed at the scene to take responsibility for the incident, according to the report.

Student to modify hair to get back into class

NM LOS LUNAS — A compromise has been reached for a New Mexico sixth-grader who was told his hairstyle violated a school policy.

Administrators at Los Lunas Elementary told an Albuquerque TV station that Marcus Chavez, 11, showed up for classes with tribal art design razor-cut into his hair by a barber.

School officials said policy in their handbook doesn't allow unnatural colors and haircuts for students so that it doesn't distract or disrupt other pupils.

School officials said the boy's mother agreed to have a barber modify her son's haircut or darken the shaved spots.

Once that is done, the school's superintendent said, Marcus will be back in the classroom.

Couple charged after kid calls 911 15 times

NY LOWVILLE — Authorities have charged a northern New York woman and her boyfriend because the woman's 2-year-old daughter used their cellphones to dial 911 a total of 15 times last month.

Village of Lowville Police Officer Matthew Martin said the 23-year-old mother and her 33-year-old boyfriend told him they tried to keep their phones away from the persistent toddler, but the girl kept getting them and dialing 911.

Martin spoke to the couple Wednesday after Lewis County 911 dispatchers reported that a child had called 14 times in January. Martin said the child called 911 a 15th time later that night.

He charged the couple the next day with obstructing government administration.

Man admits to college bathroom beating

OH CINCINNATI — An Ohio college student

THE CENSUS

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The amount of money workers found in the pockets of suits and a robe while going through donated clothing at a Michigan thrift store. Goodwill manager Tyler Gedelman told The Monroe Evening News that he sometimes finds loose change in clothing, but nothing like what happened Wednesday at the Monroe store. Stuffed in envelopes in the pockets were tidy stacks of \$100 bills.



LARA CERRI, THE TAMPA BAY (FLA.) TIMES/AP

No snow? No problem

Two people lounge with a view of the Gulf of Mexico from Pass-a-Grille in St. Pete Beach, Fla., on Tuesday.

who admitted to beating and robbing a delivery man in a campus bathroom — then tried to have the man killed so he couldn't testify — is facing 30 years in prison.

Kendall Flucas, 21, pleaded guilty Monday to aggravated robbery, felonious assault and conspiracy to commit murder.

The Cincinnati Enquirer reported that Flucas beat the man with a rock and his fists and stole his money.

When several people asked him about the noise in the bathroom, Flucas told them a man was having bowel issues.

Gallup polls: State is least religious

VT MONTPELIER — Gallup says that Vermont is the least religious state in the nation.

Poll results show that 22 percent of Vermonters identify as

"very religious" and 56 percent of Vermonters identify as "nonreligious."

New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts and Oregon join Vermont to make up the top five least religious states in the country.

Gallup based the results on more than 174,000 interviews done during Gallup Daily tracking in 2013.

Family faces decision on its illegal pet pig

FL PENSACOLA — The Kirkmans of Pensacola are facing a deadline in deciding what to do about their pet pot-bellied pig named Buttercup.

The pig is in violation of the city of Pensacola's ordinance banning "livestock" within city limits. They've given the family until May to move, get rid of Buttercup or persuade the city council to change the ordinance.

David Kirkman, his wife Laura and their children, Molly, 9, and Butch, 7, say Buttercup isn't livestock. They say she's a pet they've raised since she was 5 weeks old.

The Pensacola News Journal reported the code enforcement board cited the family in December after receiving an anonymous tip that they were keeping a pig on their property.

Council member Sherri Myers is taking up the cause. She thinks the ordinance is outdated.

Pastor sets a new Guinness world record

IN FREMONT — A northern Indiana pastor and his wife have earned a place in the Guinness World Records by setting an unusual — and painful — world record.

John and Amy Bruney became the new champs in Guinness' category of one person skipping rope

on a bed of nails resting that's on top of another person.

Bruney placed a 125-pound board bristling with 3,000 nails that had been hammered through it on his chest and stomach. To break the old record, Amy had to skip a rope at least 70 times, but she managed to skip rope atop that board a record-setting 117 times.

"I told her, 'Don't stop no matter what you hear below,'" John Bruney told The Journal Gazette.

Bruney, who's pastor of Zion Missionary Church in the far northeastern Indiana town of Fremont, stages inspirational strong-man shows around the country a handful of times each year, the newspaper reported.

He performs stunts such as driving nails with his bare hand, tearing phone books in half and snapping chains wrapped around his chest.

From wire reports

WORLD



KARIM KADIM/AP

Municipality workers prepare to remove debris from the site of a car bomb attack in the Shaah neighborhood of Baghdad on Thursday. A string of car bomb attacks hit commercial areas of the city.

String of car bombs kills 13 civilians in Iraqi capital

BY SAMEER N. YACUOB
The Associated Press

BAHGDAD — Car bomb attacks hit commercial areas in Baghdad on Thursday, killing at least 13 people, Iraqi officials said.

Police officials said the deadliest attack took place when a car bomb went off near auto spare parts shops in downtown Baghdad, killing four people and wounding nine.

Two car bombs exploded in the eastern neighborhood of Jamila and the northern neighborhood of Kazimiyah. In each at least three civilians were killed. Twenty-two civilians were wounded in these attacks.

Police added that other explosives-laden cars went

off in the central Karrada area, the northern Shaah neighborhood and the eastern Batol neighborhood. Three civilians were killed and 26 wounded.

Medical officials confirmed the casualty figures. All officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to release information.

The bombings came a day after 34 people were killed in multiple explosions, mainly in the heart of Baghdad.

Violence has escalated in Iraq over the past year. Last year, the country saw the highest death toll since the worst of the country's sectarian bloodletting began to subside in 2007, according to United Nations figures. The U.N. said violence killed 8,868 last year in Iraq.

Iran's president regrets food ration problems

BY NASSER KARIMI
The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — In a rare expression of regret by an Iranian official, President Hassan Rouhani said Thursday that he is sorry for any troubles with the distribution of a food ration to the poor, following reports that three people have died waiting for the goods in subzero weather.

Local media have reported that the three died in recent days while standing in line in freezing temperatures. Authorities were quoted as saying that they had pre-existing heart problems.

Most provinces in Iran have experienced unusually low temperatures in recent days.

Rouhani told state TV that he "as the president expresses regret if people have faced trouble in receiving the commodity basket."

It's unusual for an official in Iran to take responsibility for problems in a governmental plan.

The ration for the poor includes eggs, cooking oil, chicken, rice and cheese. The program was instituted under Rouhani's predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, originally just for government workers.

Rouhani's administration decided to extend it from 3 million people to 17 million, out of a total population of 76 million. The plan is largely intended to counteract inflation, fed by the sanctions imposed on Iran over its nuclear program.

Amid protests, Ukraine more divided than ever

BY MARIA DANILOVA
The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — The mayor of a western city warned that his police would fight any troops sent in by the president. The governor of an eastern region posted an image of an opposition lawmaker beaten bloody, saying he couldn't contain his laughter.

ANALYSIS Two months into Ukraine's anti-government protests, the sides are only moving further apart.

To be sure, Ukraine has never been monolithic. Russia and Europe have vied for dominance for centuries, fostering deep cultural differences between the mostly Ukrainian-speaking western and central regions and that yearn for ties with the West, and the Russian-speaking east and south that looks to Russia for support.

As the crisis has deepened, each side has grown stronger in its convictions — and those who stood in the middle have been forced to choose sides.

The demonstrations began with an old question: Should Ukraine follow a European path or move closer into Russia's sphere? In November, President Viktor Yanukovich — after years of touting a political and economic treaty with the European Union — had abruptly walked out on it in favor of a bailout loan from Russia. But the crisis changed significantly a week later when riot police violently broke up a small, peaceful rally in the middle of the night on Kiev's central square.

Suddenly, the calls for EU integration were replaced with demands for Yanukovich's ouster and a new government that would guarantee human rights and democratic freedoms. Slogans such as "Ukraine is Europe" were replaced by "Down with the gang!"

The divide deepened further as peaceful protests turned ever more violent. Last month, after four protesters were killed and police were widely reported to have beaten and abused activists, the opposition's anger became more intense. And Yanukovich's supporters were appalled by images of riot policemen set aflame by protesters' Molotov cocktails, the toppling of a statue of former



EREN FUKATSKY/AP

Anti-government protesters prepare to rally Thursday in Kiev's Independence Square, epicenter of Ukraine's unrest.

Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin and the occupation of government buildings.

The differing visions are rooted in cultural realities. To the west, protest-friendly Lviv feels like a typical European city, with cobblestone streets, Catholic churches and outdoor cafes. To the east, the Yanukovich stronghold of Kharkiv is an industrial city with massive Soviet architecture and a giant Lenin statue.

Linguistics also come into play in a country where roughly 40 percent of people speak Ukrainian at home, a third speak Russian and a quarter speak both. The two languages are closely related and it is not uncommon for one Ukrainian to address another in one language and hear a response in another. Most speakers on Kiev's Independence Square address the crowds in Ukrainian, but both languages are heard at the barricades.

But what for years have been friendly rivalries became tense feuds as the violence increased. The mayors of western and eastern cities traded barbs, while on the streets of Kiev — roughly in the center of the country — angry protesters tossed firebombs and rocks at police, who responded with tear gas and rubber bullets.

The country now stands split nearly down the middle. According to a December poll by the Razumkov Center think tank, 50 percent of Ukrainians supported the protests while 43 percent opposed them. The poll, which interviewed 2,010 people across Ukraine in person, had a margin of error of 2.3 percentage points.

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WORLD

Bear bile business in S. Korea dwindling

The Associated Press

DANGJIN, South Korea — Several bears lie on top of each other, as still as teddy bears, as they gaze out past rusty iron bars. Others pace restlessly. The ground below their metal cages is littered with feces, Krispy Kreme doughnuts, dog food and fruit. They've been kept in these dirty pens since birth, bred for a single purpose: to be killed for their bile.

But these bears aren't dying. The industry is. Though their bile has been used as medicine in Asia for thousands of years, cheaper foreign sources, growing skepticism over bear bile's medicinal value and worries about international condemnation have led to a huge drop in South Korean demand. Kim KwangSoo, the owner of this farm in Dangjin,



LEE JIN-MAN/AP

A bear looks out from a cage at a bear farm in Dangjin, south of Seoul, South Korea.

about 75 miles south of Seoul, said he hasn't had a bear bile customer in five years.

That, however, doesn't ensure the animals a peaceful future. The government is offering farmers money and incentives to sterilize or slaughter their bears, but the farmers are demanding much more.

Kim, secretary general of a bear farmers' association, said farmers are considering suing or even more drastic measures — such as harming their bears — if they can't reach a deal. He said farmers will raise the issue of greater government compensation during a meeting with government officials and civilian experts Thursday.

To highlight their grievances, farmers in November brought caged bears to downtown Seoul and near a government complex in the

city of Sejong. Kim said farmers are now considering hauling bears, 20 per cage, to the Sejong government complex in the hope that the fighting, cramped animals will bring them attention.

"People talk about animal welfare ... but bear farmers aren't getting any welfare," said Yun Youngdeok, who runs a bear farm near Seoul. "We feel like we are dying earlier (than our bears)."

South Korea is one of the few countries that allow the farming of bears to extract bile for traditional medicine. About 50 farms are raising about 1,000 bears, mostly Asiatic black bears, also known as moon bears. Kim said South Koreans were once willing to pay between \$18,450 to \$27,680 to have a bear slaughtered for its bile.

Questions raised about 'Japan's Beethoven'

The Associated Press

TOKYO — The ghostwriter for the musician lauded as Japan's Beethoven said Thursday he became fed up and ended their 18-year collaboration last year and he questioned if Mamoru Samuragochi really could hear.

Samuragochi, 50, had previously claimed to be the sole author of his classical works and sound tracks for video games, such as "Biohazard," despite having lost his hearing by age 35. His story resonated in Japan, where perseverance is greatly admired. But he admitted Wednesday that he did not write the powerful "Hiroshima Symphony" and other works credited to him.

His ghost composer, Takashi Niigaki, said he provided music for Samuragochi for 18 years and questioned if he was hearing impaired. "I saw no signs that he could not hear," Niigaki said.

A written statement from Samuragochi's lawyers apologized for what he called a "betrayal" of his fans.





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THE NEW SANNO

WORLD

Muscovites take squirrels from parks as pets

The Associated Press

MOSCOW — One by one, the bushy-tailed residents of Moscow's parks have been disappearing. The problem: Russians have gone nuts for pet squirrels.

Moscow authorities bolstered security last week for all of the city's green areas after city official Alexei Gorelov said he had received multiple reports of squirrel poaching.

Gorelov, who heads an Ecological Control unit, said more police patrols are being dispatched to fend off the poachers, who can be fined up to 20,000 rubles (\$576).

Noting that squirrels were of little use for their meat or their fur, he said most were resold as pets for 5,000 rubles (\$144) each.

"[Wild] animals have to be enjoyed from a distance," said Gorelov as he scrolled through a Russian website selling squirrel pets.

Despite the website's claims that squirrels are a "friendly and gentle" animal to keep around the house, they can bite and are not domesticated.

Some animal lovers were outraged at the poaching.

"The fine should not be 5,000 rubles, it should be 500,000 rubles for this kind of poaching," said Alexandra Mishenko, a retiree who feeds the squirrels in Moscow's parks.

"We should gather people together and pelt the person who does that with snow," she said, eyes welling with tears.



ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/AP

A squirrel gets food from women in Moscow's "Neskuchny Sad" park Monday. City official Alexei Gorelov said he has received multiple reports of squirrel poaching in local parks. He said most were resold as pets for 5,000 rubles (\$144) each.

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NATION



ASTRID RIECKEN/for The Washington Post

Capt. Kristin Saboe is an industrial organization psychologist for the U.S. Army who has done research on post-traumatic stress disorder.

Industrial psychologists help federal workers with crises, long-term challenges

By EMILY WAX-THIBODEAUX
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Over casual lunch conversations in Washington and on formal workplace surveys, federal workers make it clear: They are stressed out, depressed and angst-ridden.

The past few years, after all, have been what a therapist might call emotionally draining: pay freezes, furloughs, sequester cuts. All of which culminated in what therapists might term a total dysfunctional meltdown: October's 16-day government shutdown.

That's why the nation's nearly 2 million federal workers are the subject of both fascination and concern for government therapists, also known as industrial organization psychologists or IO's, some of whom recently spoke to local members of Congress about the feelings of low self-esteem and existential brooding that afflicted some federal workers after the shutdown.

"They feel betrayed, like a family member or friend made them a promise for stable work and then turned on them," said David Costanza, who directs the doctoral program in IO psychology at George Washington University and works with several government agencies. "Every organization has a culture, just like a family does. How they deal with conflict, choose new members and evolve is at the center of our work."

Whether it's inside the secretive offices of the National Security Agency, on a forward operating military base in Afghanistan, with a group of astronauts soon heading to outer space, these psy-

chologists essentially offer group therapy for the federal workplace. The government psychologists work with agencies as varied as the Department of Energy, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Department of Homeland Security. They are modern practitioners of a branch of psychology that emerged during World War I in response to rapid deployment of troops to extremely high-stress situations new to modern combat.

They address moments of crisis, helping federal employees tackle guilt and other feelings experienced by those who make life-and-death decisions, such as trauma surgeons in the field and airline cockpit crews whose performance is regulated by the government.

The therapists also help employees grapple with long-term challenges. One of the most dramatic examples is unfolding at NASA, where government therapists are being asked to help with a three-year, round-trip mission to Mars tentatively proposed for the early 2030s. In the most extreme example of a business trip, the small group of astronauts would spend nearly half the voyage in flight and the rest conducting research on the planet's surface.

That's a lot of together time. How will everyone get along? What if a dispute breaks out? Or the isolation wears on them?

"And you thought you spent a lot of time at work. Those astronauts will be cooped up together for years, and if members of a team don't have a way to talk out their problems, and there's nowhere to escape to, no outside

'Every organization has a culture, just like a family does. How they deal with conflict, choose new members and evolve is at the center of our work.'

David Costanza

Head of the doctoral program in IO psychology at George Washington University

boss to intervene, conflicts can have dire consequences," said Eduardo Salas, who is leading the team of psychologists working with NASA. "People can die. We can help."

An expert on teamwork in confined spaces such as submarines, Salas has been interviewing astronauts from various countries about what factors increase their stress and what helps them decompress after a long day. In an effort to reduce suspicion and tension among the Mars astronauts, he is involved in developing a software application that would identify for the entire team mistakes that individuals make in their work. That way, he said, "everyone feels like they are in it together and they want to help their buddies, and resentments and small disagreements won't fester."

Salas expects that he will help select and train the team for the Mars mission, what he describes as a "three-year team dynamic that is relatively untested."

"Technology made the study of personalities at work more urgent," Costanza said. "You couldn't just put anyone in a blimp, plane or tank, where teamwork and steady temperament during extreme trauma became

important."

Much of workplace therapy is based on the findings of Hugo Munsterberg, considered the father of the field, who cautioned managers to be concerned with "all the questions of the mind ... like fatigue, monotony, interest, learning, work satisfaction, and rewards." Since his groundbreaking work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the field has expanded across private industry as well as the public sector.

At the FBI, three staff IO psychologists helped revamp the agency's promotion process after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. They added new ways of identifying qualified managers, such as using job simulations, and

encouraged the bureau to put greater emphasis on leadership ability rather than expertise in a particular field, said psychologist Amy Grubb.

"Big-bang events like 9/11 or any kind of crisis are very traumatic, both in the workplace and in the country. We wanted agency leaders to be leaning forward, as opposed to being static," she said.

More recently, the FBI psychologists studied the connection between the performance of bosses and the effectiveness of their agents and other subordinates. The IOs found that managers who were highly rated by their employees, such as being open to competing opinions, had teams that made more arrests and provided better intelligence, Grubb said.

One of the field's biggest achievements has been to help change attitudes in the military and intelligence agencies toward post-traumatic stress disorder, which didn't used to be recognized as an illness and was often seen as a weakness.

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FAITH

Come to play stay to pray



PHOTOS BY PABLO ALCALA, LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER/MCT

Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church in Midway, Ky., is building a 61,300-square-foot recreation facility to serve its 2,000 members.

Church in rural Ky. building recreation facility as service, invitation to community

BY MARY MEEHAN
Lexington Herald Leader

TORKS OF ELKHORN, Ky. Odd Lester, pastor of Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church near Midway, Ky., knows people don't always come to church through the front door.

In fact, he understands the sentiment so well his congregation is investing millions of dollars in a recreational facility to rival many commercial gyms, hoping that people who come to play will stay to pray in his rural Kentucky church.

The church is building a 61,300-square-foot addition that will include an elevated walking track, two basketball courts, a workout room, weight rooms and all manner of classes and athletic leagues.

Lester said the new CROSS center — which stands for Christian Recreation Outreach Strengthening Souls — is an amped-up version of a tool he's used for years in his ministry — the church basketball or softball league.

Lester hopes it will be a service to, and an invitation for, the community.

"They might come in through the back door or side door," he said. "Hopefully, we will get them into the sanctuary."

Lester knows how to attract people to church, his church most specifically. When he started at Forks of Elkhorn



Pastor Todd Lester, left, and recreation director Lee Rainwater at the construction site of the church's CROSS center.

about 15 years ago, the congregation had 35 members meeting in the same small building where it had begun services more than 200 years ago.

He built a sandwich board kind of sign to place out on U.S. Highway 421 just to let people know that the little chapel was in business down Duckers Lane, north

of Midway, south of Frankfort, Ky., and surrounded by farm land.

Lester doubled the church's membership in the first few years. Since then Forks of the Elkhorn Baptist Church has grown to 2,000 members, and in 2003 the congregation moved into a new, modern church building.

The planning for the recreation center began about four years ago, Lester said. At the time, in the midst of the recession, the economy didn't seem ripe for a large building campaign. But, he and the congregation were rapidly outgrowing its current space and needed a larger area for children's ministry. Church members agreed there was a recreational need to be met, too, and a way to reach out to the community.

"The body is the temple of God," Lester said. "When we give our lives to Christ, we have to try to take care of the temple."

The new church building — scheduled to open in late spring or early summer — has provided the church with experience in tackling a big project. As a sign of commitment to the effort, the project, which cost \$3.5 million in 2003, and was paid off in six years, Lester said.

The church has hired a recreational director, Lee Rainwater, who had worked in physical education at Asbury University for 16 years.

The center will have state-of-the-art

equipment but a decidedly different atmosphere than most gyms, Rainwater said. A dress code with an eye toward modesty will be enforced and families will be encouraged to participate together.

"We don't want anybody to feel intimidated," Rainwater said, adding that he plans to work with local schools, such as Georgetown and Midway colleges, to offer internships to students majoring in recreation or related fields.

Church members will be able to use the facilities for free, Lester said, and members of the community will pay a nominal fee, although specifics haven't been determined. There won't be a hard sell on gym membership, both men say. Instead, as people get to know each other while working out it's possible that an invitation to Sunday worship services might be extended, Lester said.

The theme of tending to body, mind and spirit will become more evident throughout the church as the opening of the center nears, Lester said. Even as the physical space occupied by the church grows, the small town heart of the church will be preserved.

Plus, you're likely to see Lester out on the basketball court because he doesn't want to be the guy "in a suit on Sunday morning at the pulpit."

"I still go out there and play," he said.

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Tobacco plan could ripple beyond CVS

By TOM MURPHY
AND MICHAEL FELBERBAUM
The Associated Press

CVS Caremark's decision to pull cigarettes and other tobacco products from its stores could ripple beyond the nation's second-largest drugstore chain.

The move, which drew praise from President Barack Obama, doctors and anti-smoking groups, was announced on Wednesday, puts pressure on other retailers to stop selling to-

bacco as well. CVS Caremark Corp. said it will phase out tobacco by Oct. 1 in its 7,600 stores nationwide as it shifts toward being more of a health care provider.

CVS, based in Woonsocket, R.I., follows a precedent set by other drugstores. Most independent pharmacies abstain from tobacco sales, according to the National Community Pharmacists Association. Pharmacies in Europe also don't sell cigarettes, and neither does major U.S. retailer Target

Corp., which operates some pharmacies in its stores.

But the world's largest retailer, Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which also operates pharmacies, does sell tobacco. So do CVS competitors Walgreen Co. and Rite Aid Corp.

Both Walgreen and Rite Aid representatives said Wednesday that they are always evaluating what they offer customers and whether that meets their needs.

Gabelli Funds analyst Jeff Jonas agrees. "I think once one

chain does it, the other one really has to follow," he said. Gabelli noted, though, that Rite Aid may be less likely to do so because it hasn't made the same in-store investment in clinics as the other chains.

Either way, the move by CVS highlights the pressure companies that sell tobacco are facing to kick that habit 480,000 deaths a year in the U.S., according to the Food and Drug Administration.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Feb. 7)	\$1.3966
Dollar buys (Feb. 7)	€0.7160
British pound (Feb. 7)	\$1.67
Japanese yen (Feb. 7)	99.00
South Korean won (Feb. 7)	1,049.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3769
British pound	\$1.6312/1.6127
Canada (dollar)	1.1094
China (Yuan)	6.0605
Denmark (Krone)	5.4844
Egypt (Pound)	6.6639
Euro	\$1.3607/7.349
Hong Kong (Dollar)	1.7593
Hungary (Forint)	226.59
Israel (Shekel)	3.5393
Japan (Yen)	101.78
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2824
Norway (Krone)	6.1945
Philippines (Peso)	45.16
Poland (Zloty)	3.08
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7505
Singapore (Dollar)	1.2679
South Korea (Won)	1,077.54
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8990
Thailand (Baht)	32.80
Turkey (New Lira)	2.2176

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., rates provided for reference when buying currency, all figures are foreign currencies to the dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	4.00
Federal funds market rate	0.07
3-month bill	0.04
30-year bond	3.65

EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$3.529	\$3.712	\$3.888	\$4.188
Change in price	-0.3 cents	+0.1 cents	-0.3 cents	+4.7 cents
Netherlands	---	\$4.612	\$4.900	\$4.953
Change in price	---	-4.7 cents	-5.0 cents	-5.1 cents
U.K.	---	\$3.647	\$3.823	\$4.123
Change in price	---	-0.1 cents	-0.3 cents	+4.7 cents
Azores	---	---	---	---
Change in price	---	---	---	---
Belgium	---	\$3.851	\$4.006	\$4.266
Change in price	---	-2.5 cents	-2.3 cents	-2.1 cents
Turkey	---	---	\$4.445	\$4.056*
Change in price	---	---	---	+4.7 cents
Italy	---	\$3.936	---	---
Change in price	---	no change	---	no change

PACIFIC GAS PRICES

Country	Unleaded	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Japan	---	\$3.649	---	\$3.949
Change in price	---	no change	---	+5.0 cents
Okinawa	\$3.459	---	---	\$3.949
Change in price	-2.0 cents	---	---	+5.0 cents
South Korea	\$2.546	---	\$3.909	\$4.209
Change in price	no change	---	no change	+5.0 cents
Guam	\$3.539*	\$3.719	\$3.899	---
Change in price	-1.0 cents	-1.0 cents	-1.0 cents	---

* Diesel EFD ** Midgrade
For the week of Feb. 8-15

MARKET WATCH

Feb. 5, 2014

Dow Jones Industrials	-5.01
	15,440.23
Nasdaq composite	-19.97
	4,011.55
Standard & Poor's 500	-3.56
	1,751.64
Russell 2000	-9.25
	1,093.59

WEATHER OUTLOOK



WEEKEND

Coming to America

50 years ago, The Beatles changed everything

Fab Four's appearance on 'Ed Sullivan' gave birth to Beatlemania, made television take rock 'n' roll seriously

Page 24

Stars and Stripes editor recounts watching the historic telecast

Page 25



WEEKEND: GADGETS & CHARTS

Marvel rewrites approach to female characters

By SABAA TAHIR

Special to The Washington Post

On Wednesday, Marvel Comics debuted its reboot of Ms. Marvel — in which she's introduced as a Muslim-American teenager from Jersey City, N.J. — as part of a broader women's initiative that the publisher is calling "Characters and Creators."

As part of the initiative, Black Widow, Elektra and She-Hulk will be getting their own books, and X-Men and Captain Marvel will see a new emphasis on women.

Even as Ms. Marvel takes a big step forward for diversity in comics, the "Characters and Creators" initiative has broader implications as it aims to speak directly to an audience that long was not the target for superhero comic books in America: women and girls.

Axel Alonso, Marvel's editor-in-chief, says that the stars of these new books "are not the big-breasted, scantily clad women that you might expect to become the comic-book cliché. They are women with rich interior lives, interesting careers and complicated families who are defined by many things — least of all their looks."

Rounds promising. Is Alonso worried about scaring off the traditional male readership associated with comic books?

"What people want are heroes," he says. "They want fascinating stories with compelling characters, regardless of gender."

Jeanine Schaefer, who edits the new, all-female X-Men, agrees.



The new Ms. Marvel series, which came out Feb. 5, is part of Marvel Comics' "Characters and Creators" initiative.

"There's this fear that the men who have traditionally been our fan base won't stop reading if we bring in new voices," Schaefer said. "But we're finding that that's just not the case."

The proof is in the numbers, and in the case of the all-female X-Men series, the numbers are solid. The first book was released last May, and became Marvel's top-selling comic that month.

The comic book world, Alonso asserts, is no longer a boys' club. "While we don't have any market research, the eyes don't lie," he tells us. "If you go to conventions and comic book stores, more and more female readers are emerging. They are starved for content and looking for content they can relate to."

So is this just about the bottom line? Is there a group of dudes sitting around a table at Marvel, trying to come up with books they think female fans will want? After all, according to the website Comics Alliance, Marvel only has seven female-led books (DC Comics, for comparison's sake, has nine female-led books).

"It's easy for fans to think, 'They're just a bunch of guys doing what they think women want,'" Schaefer said. But, "It's not about publicity or trying to jump on the bandwagon."

ON THE COVER: The Beatles, clockwise from top center, John Lennon, George Harrison, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr, pose in a Paris photo shoot in January 1964, just a month before their landmark first visit to the United States.

AP photo

GADGET WATCH

Martian Passport a watch with a brain

By GREGG ELLMAN

McClatchy-Tribune News Service

At last month's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, there seemed to be an explosion of technologically advanced watches.

I predict it will be the usual game of musical chairs, with only a few brands lasting after the music stops, much like the explosion of tablets at the show a few years ago.

One I'm sure will last is the Martian Passport series, which they promote as "The World's First Voice Command Smartwatch."

This is a rare time that I did have to read the instructions, but they were clear and easy to follow; press this button, then that button, etc.

They do have an interesting item in the instruction book about how the average person checks their phone 150 times a day. I'm sure many of those 150 are to check the time for those with a watchless wrist.

Once you're set up and make a Bluetooth connection with your smartphone, you get notifications of callers, email, social media, texts, calendar alerts and event-activated Siri on an iPhone.

You can respond with the watch and talk into it like you're a secret agent or just use it as an alert to either take out your smartphone or ignore it.

If the contact information for the caller is in your phone, you'll see that name on the watch display. If you don't have the name entered, you'll see the phone number.

All the other information you are being alerted to is shown on the display running across the bottom of the front of the watch (96-by-16-pixel graphic OLED display).

The Martian watch also can be set to trigger your phone's camera so you can get in the photo.

Once your watch is paired with a phone, it will vibrate when you get out of range of each other (Bluetooth range is about 30 feet), letting you know you left the phone behind.

An internal battery needs to be charged for 2 hours every few days via USB, depending on the amount of use.

I have to admit, it does take a little getting used to, having your wrist vibrating for a phone call or message alert. I've gotten some odd looks from my comrades.

In addition to the smartphone capabilities, this is one good-looking watch — and it tells time, too!

Online: martianwatches.com; \$299 in color combinations of black, white and silver



MCT photos

Eye-Fi Mobi automatically transfers your photos and videos from your camera to your smartphone or tablet, no matter where you are, via its own Wi-Fi network.

The Eye-Fi SD media cards have been around for years. I've had great success with them going from a camera to a computer, but a direct connection to my iPad has been cumbersome and involved error-prone third-party apps.

All that came to an end last month when I tried the Eye-Fi Mobi Wi-Fi Camera to camera 8GB SDHC Class 10 memory card along with the Eye-Fi app (free for iOS, Android and Kindle Fire).

The setup is simple and it worked from the start; just download the app and enter the provided activation code.

Inside the memory card is Wi-Fi, letting you make a direct connection from the memory card to your device, so this system works without an Internet connection. Assuming you put the memory card in an Eye-Fi-compatible camera, you're all set to start taking photos.

Images captured on the memory card are automatically downloaded into my iOS (iPhone 5s) image library, where they can be sent to social media when you switch to an Internet connection.

Since the images are still stored on the card, you will be able to download them for archiving on your computer.

This system enables you to use a real camera for optimum image quality vs. using a cellphone, which provides instant access for social media but will not be the best quality for long-term use for large prints, etc.

I tested it with large JPGs on a high-end digital SLR and a point-and-shoot camera and found both to work great for photos and video.

Online: www.eyefi.com; \$49.99 8GB, \$79.99 16GB, \$99.99 32GB

Paick's new portable battery called the Noble is only a half-inch thick but has a powerful 6000mAh in-battery inside. The pocket-sized battery is also fashionable, featuring an aluminum alloy high-performance case.

A dust-proof pop-up slot opens to display two USB and one microUSB ports for charging.

The iPhone 5 series can get up to three charges before the battery needs a charge; other smartphones can get two charges and an iPad once.

Online: www.paick.com; \$49.99 until March 20.

iTUNES MUSIC

Top 10 songs on the iTunes Store for Feb. 5:

1. "Dark Horse," Katy Perry (feat. Juicy J)
2. "Happy" (from "Despicable Me 2"), Pharrell Williams
3. "Let Her Go," Passenger
4. "Say Something," A Great Big World & Christina Aguilera
5. "The Man," Aloe Blacc
6. "Pompeii," Bastille
7. "Timber," Pitbull (feat. Ke\$ha)
8. "Locked Out of Heaven," Bruno Mars
9. "All of Me," John Legend
10. "Team," Lorde

— Compiled by MCT

SPOTIFY MUSIC

The top streamed tracks on Spotify from Jan. 27 to Feb. 2:

1. Katy Perry, "Dark Horse"
2. Beyonce, "Drunk In Love"
3. Lorde, "Royals"
4. Bastille, "Pompeii"
5. Pitbull, "Timber"
6. Lorde, "Team"
7. Jason Derulo, "Talk Dirty" — feat. 2 Chainz
8. A Great Big World, "Say Something"
9. OneRepublic, "Counting Stars"
10. Imagine Dragons, "Radioactive ft. Kendrick Lamar"

— Compiled by The Associated Press

iTUNES MOVIES

Top 10 movies downloaded from the iTunes Store for Feb. 5:

1. "Dallas Buyers Club"
2. "Escape Plan"
3. "Captain Phillips"
4. "Last Vegas"
5. "Jack Re: Paradox"
6. Bad Grandpa (Unrated)
7. "About Time"
8. "Rush"
9. "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2"
10. "Blackish"
11. "Ender's Game"



— Compiled by MCT

VIDEO GAMES

Game Informer Magazine ranks the top 10 games of 2013:

1. "The Last of Us," PS3
2. "Grand Theft Auto V," PS3, 360
3. "BioShock Infinite," PS3, 360, PC
4. "Dota 2," PC
5. "The Legend of Zelda: A Link Between Worlds," 3DS
6. "Tomb Raider," PS4, Xbox One, PS3, 360, PC
7. "Super Mario 3D," Wii U
8. "The Stanley Parable," PC
9. "Brothers — A Tale of Two Sons," PS4, Xbox One, PC
10. "Rayman Legends," Wii U, PS3, 360, PC, Vita

— Compiled by MCT

APPS

Top 5 new free apps for Feb. 5:

ANDROID

1. Flappy Bird
2. Matcatross Meltdown
3. Clumsy Bird
4. Slots Vacation
5. Blackjack

Top 5 free apps for Feb. 5:

APPLE

1. Flappy Bird
2. Ironpants
3. Hidden Objects: Mystery Crimes Valentine's
4. Unroll Me — unlock the slots
5. Super Ball Juggling

— Compiled by MCT

WEEKEND

CHECK IT OUT

Events, entertainment and other ways to fill your free time

1

Invasion of The Beatles

Beatles fans, their songs and their pop-culture references are so myriad that it's almost impossible for many of us to imagine an era before the band achieved near-mythical status. "The Night That Changed America: A GRAMMY salute to the Beatles" seeks to give some insight into the band's explosion into the American consciousness. The official 50-year anniversary since the Fab Four's appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" is Feb. 9, but you'll have to wait until Feb. 17 to see the television special aired on AFN. While you're waiting, check out the link below to see rare footage, complete with teen girls' incessant screams and longing gazes, from that landmark Sunday evening.

- Watch the fledgling Beatles at tinyurl.com/ob69xz8
- "The Night That Changed America" airs Feb. 17 on AFN-Prime



The Beatles — from left, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr on drums, George Harrison and John Lennon — made Americans first lose their minds over the British mop-tops and officially kicked off Beatlemania this side of the Atlantic 50 years ago on Feb. 9.

AP

2

Rentals to feed your inner romantic

A couple of last fall's sweet releases hit the DVD store shelves this week. Rachel McAdams stars in another time-traveling romance in "About Time," and "Baggage Claim" follows a flight attendant, played by Paula Patton, who hunts for Mr. Right among her exes.

- More new DVD releases on page 39



3

British celebs deliver 'Awww' moments

Bestselling author Neil Gaiman and actor Benedict Cumberbatch probably found yet more fans this week. Gaiman ("The Graveyard Book," "Neverwhere") promised he would read "Green Eggs and Ham" by Dr. Seuss if the fundraising campaign for the charity Worldbuilders reached \$500,000. With about five days left, it did, and he did. Cumberbatch, star of TV's "Sherlock," visited Sesame Street to get some help solving a riddle from his arch-nemesis, "Murray-arty."

- Gaiman clip: tinyurl.com/qb7h4kn
- Cumberbatch clip: tinyurl.com/pf6gfkf

4

Military widow tells painful, poignant story

Army widow Artis Henderson's unflinching memoir of love and loss isn't an easy one to read, but it's an important one to understand. The author says she regrets that it took losing her husband to find her place in the military community. "Unmarried Widow," which has received rave reviews, is available on amazon.com.



Henderson

- See page 38 for a book review, and read more about the author on Page 41

WEEKEND: MUSIC

YEAH YEAH



YEAH!

50 years ago, The Beatles changed
the way TV viewed rock 'n' roll

By MICHAEL HEWITT
The Orange County Register

Above: The Beatles, from left, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Ringo Starr on drums, and John Lennon make their first U.S. appearance, on "The Ed Sullivan Show," on Feb. 9, 1964, in New York.

AP

If you were a grown-up on Feb. 9, 1964, and within reach of a television set, you might well have tuned to CBS to watch "The Ed Sullivan Show." After all, the competition was "Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color" on NBC and a short-lived Western on ABC called "The Travels of Jaimie McPheeters."

Besides, maybe you were curious about this new singing group that was creating such a furor. Or maybe your kids were making you.

Because if you were under 18, old enough to know the difference and not facing some sort of reprehensible and totally unfair punishment from your parents, you almost certainly did tune in to see the American television debut of the Beatles.

The Fab Four had arrived in New York just two days earlier to complete their incredibly rapid conquest of America.

SEE BEATLES ON PAGE 25

'Sullivan' setlist

Feb. 9, 1964

First set

"All My Loving"
"Till There Was You"
"She Loves You"

Second set

"I Saw Her Standing There"
"I Want to Hold Your Hand"

WEEKEND: MUSIC

Beatles: Band, baby boomers reshaped the music business, prime-time television

FROM PAGE 24

Virtually unknown in the U.S. before the Dec. 26, 1963, release of "I Want to Hold Your Hand," the Beatles flew in on the wings of that No. 1 single, along with the No. 1 album "Meet the Beatles" and a wave of teenage admiration that was quickly coined "Beatlemania."

America had seen its young people fall for pop stars before. Frank Sinatra made the girls swoon in the '40s and Elvis Presley did it in the '50s, but Beatlemania coincided neatly with the baby boom, giving it demographic clout that predecessor fads couldn't muster.

In 1964, the last boomers were being hatched and the first ones were turning 18, and the Beatles' first appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" was when the cohort showed the remarkable power of its remarkable numbers.

The Feb. 9 episode was watched by 73 million people, making it the most-watched TV show to that date. A second performance a week later was No. 2. Those are more impressive when we consider that most of the people who were dying to watch The Beatles didn't have control of the family TV.

A trip to America was inevitable for The Beatles, but it was Sullivan who first brought them over for his popular Sunday variety show. A former journalist who had started his New York-based series in 1948 as "The Toast of the Town," Sullivan had a keen eye for talent and kept his show on top — it was a top 10 series even without the Beatles — by out-competing other variety shows for the biggest names.

Sullivan also had a history of booking rock 'n' roll acts, despite a personal distaste for the music. He brought on Elvis in 1956 after "The Steve Allen Show" racked up huge ratings with the young rocker. Elvis' appearance with Sullivan drew nearly 60 million viewers, and thereafter Sullivan occasionally found a spot for the likes of Buddy Holly or Roy Orbison.

He had had a personal experience with Beatlemania during a visit to England in October 1963, when he saw 140 kids waiting in the rain at Heathrow Airport for John, Paul, George and Ringo to return from a tour of Sweden. So when Beatles manager Brian Epstein showed up a couple of weeks later in New York, Sullivan was open to the idea of booking the Liverpool lads.

A number of kids have grown up around the Feb. 9 appearance. The most well-known says that juvenile crime all but disappeared in America that night — "a fact" that has never been substantiated.

We do know that George Harrison had strain throat and remained at the Plaza hotel during rehearsals. Road manager Neil Aspinall sat in on guitar as the rest of the Beatles tried out the set Sullivan's people built for them.

According to Beatles biographer Philip Norman, Epstein approached Sullivan and said, "I would like to know the exact wording of your introduction."

"I would like you to get lost," Sullivan responded.

The show itself went more smoothly. Sullivan introduced them prosaically, but the last word was drowned out by the screams from the audience. The Beatles launched into their latest single, "All My Loving," and history was in progress. During the second number, "Till There Was You," captions identified each of The Beatles by first name. Under John Lennon's was added, "Sorry girls, He's married."

A week later, after a stop in Washington, D.C., for their first American concert, the Beatles were in Miami Beach to join Sullivan's annual snowbird episode. Despite the spectacular showing of the previous week, they had to share top billing with Mitzi Gaynor.

The Beatles made a third appearance Feb. 23, although it had been taped Feb. 9.

The Beatles and the baby boomers combined to completely reshape the music business, but to a lesser extent they made an impact on television, too.

Before that, most rock 'n' roll on TV aired outside of network prime time, on Dick's Clark's afternoon show "American Bandstand" or a handful of syndicated or regional shows.

The Beatles proved that prime time could no longer consider rock 'n' roll a minor annoyance tolerated to provide a little entertainment for the kids. With the mammoth baby boomer audience clamoring for their music, rock 'n' roll acts became essential for prime-time variety shows.

Throughout the 1960s, it became standard for rock acts to do cameos on scripted shows, too: Chad & Jeremy on "The Patty Duke Show," Davie Allan and the Arrows on "Get Smart," the Beau Brummels on "The Flintstones," the Seeds on "The Mothers-in-Law," Buffalo Springfield on "Manixx,"

"Shindig!" debuted Sept. 16, 1964, with Sam Cooke and the Righteous Brothers as headlines and was an instant success. It was joined by NBC's knock-off, "Hulabaloo," in January.

The day of the rock 'n' roll variety show didn't last long — both shows were canceled in 1966. But rock 'n' roll continued to be a staple on prime time.

"The Monkees" came to life in 1966, a show meant to be a weekly showcase for the American version of the successful Beatles movies "A Hard Day's Night" and "Help!" featuring a quartet put together by the producers.

Although variety shows aimed solely at the teen audience did not thrive, the standard variety series continued to do well, with producers routinely booking acts that previously had been looked on as novelties or too edgy for prime time.

The Doors appeared on Sullivan's show in 1967 — and angered the host by not changing the lyric "you know we couldn't get much higher" after promising they would. The Jefferson Airplane played Sullivan and "The Smothers Brothers Country Hour" as did the Who, smashing their instruments on the latter.

It was a relationship that would last until the variety show died in the late '70s. MTV launched in 1981 and pop music again moved to the outskirts of television, to be brought back in force, but in different form, by the young contestants of "American Idol."



Up next: Beatlemania. Ed Sullivan, center, stands with, from left, Ringo Starr, George Harrison, John Lennon and Paul McCartney, during a rehearsal for The Beatles' historic first American appearance, on Sullivan's popular variety show.

Yesterday, and today

A Stars and Stripes editor remembers that historic night

By DALTON FLEMING

Stars and Stripes

"Close your eyes and I'll kiss you..." The words, full of excitement and promise and carried aloft by electric guitars and drums, soared above the screaming din of the packed New York theater, out through television sets across the land and into history. The Beatles had arrived in America.

It was February 9, 1964, and I was among a nationwide community of TV viewers who tuned in to watch Ed Sullivan formally introduce a new musical sensation from England, as the gregarious host and emcee would put it. I was 10, and that introduction was the beginning of a relationship that would last a lifetime.

I didn't see it coming, of course. No one did not least The Beatles themselves. But there was a sense that something new was happening, and it was a big deal.

A big enough deal that it drew 73 million TV viewers, a record at the time. "I Want to Hold Your Hand" was at the top of U.S. music charts, and partly through the appeal of their music and partly through shrewd marketing, The Beatles had aroused a nation's curiosity.

While they were at it, they improved its mood.

It was just two and a half months earlier that we had gathered before our TVs in stunned mourning for the slain President Kennedy, transfixed by the images that unfolded. The tearful news anchor announcing the president's death. The shooting of the presumed assassin. The riderless horse and the somber procession of the caisson past a fatherless son's salute.

To this day, those images haunt the collective memory of those who witnessed them.

As to this day, we remember the joyous spectacle of four young musicians making an unstated promise that you can change the world with a song.

Indeed, a case could be made that on that February night, The Beatles established themselves at ground zero of an explosion of creative exuberance, idealism and free thinking that marked the transitional era from the killing of John Kennedy to the landing on the moon. Certainly the band's cultural impact transcends the purview of mere music makers.

But music makers they were, first and foremost, and at the very least they provided the soundtrack for an era, and that became a body of work for the ages.

The Beatles played five songs on that

first Sullivan appearance, opening with "All My Loving," a cover of "Till There Was You" from Broadway's "The Music Man" and "She Loves You." Then, after what must have seemed to a 10-year-old an interminable wait through acts of magic, comedy, acrobatics, celebrity impressions and a show tune or two, they returned to play "I Saw Her Standing There" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand."

I remember the screams of the teenagers in the audience, and my father remarking that the band, with their long hair, looked like girls. And that bit when John, Paul, George and Ringo were identified by captions, with a note under John's reading "Sorry, girls, he's married."

That stuck with me.

So, of course, did

the music. Though not at first.

The popularity of The Beatles soon unleashed the so-called British Invasion as a succession of pop music acts followed their path to America. During a brief period of peer rebellion, I became stubbornly convinced that The Dave Clark Five would be around much longer and threw my lot with them. It wasn't long before The Beatles brought me back into the fold, where I remain.

Among my younger acquaintances, I know very few who aren't passionate about The Beatles, or at least about certain records if not their entire catalogue. They know them through their parents, or older brothers or sisters, or college roommates, or classic rock radio, and they know that something about them strikes a universal chord.

Sometimes, they remark that they are envious — "because you were there." They wonder what it must have been like to hear those songs, fresh and new, in the context of those times, bearing witness to history before we realized what we were witnessing. I suppose I've wondered the same about Sinatra and the bobby-soxers.

It's nice to say I was "there" when The Beatles made their big debut, but faded memory negates some of that advantage. Fortunately, all any of us needs to do to experience the excitement of that night is to put The Beatles on the stereo. It's all right there, in the grooves, eternal.



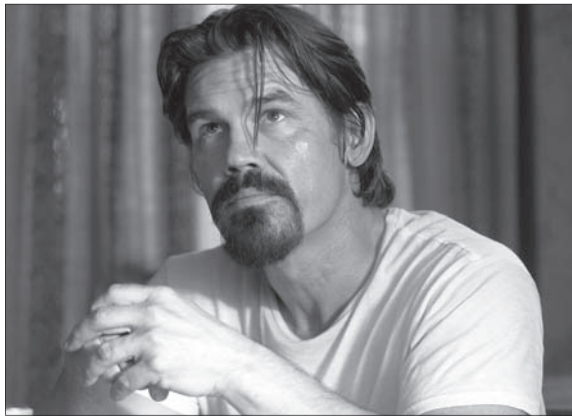
Dalton Fleming, a veteran news journalist, arts writer and musician, is an editor at Stars and Stripes.

WEEKEND: MOVIES



PARAMOUNT PICTURES/AP

A single mother (Kate Winslet) gets involved with an escaped convict (Josh Brolin, center and right) in the Jason Reitman-directed drama "Labor Day," based on Joyce Maynard's 2009 novel. The film also stars Gattlin Griffith, left.



Brolin shows softer side in latest role

By COLIN COVERT
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Josh Brolin is accustomed to man-of-action roles. In his last film, "Oldboy," he handled interpersonal disputes with a blood-spattered claw hammer. His latest, "Labor Day," repositions him as the lead of a love story. In his big action scene, he sinks his hands into a bowl of sliced, sugared peaches and bakes Kate Winslet a pie. "I think I've missed out on something, because I enjoyed it thoroughly," Brolin said in an interview after the film's debut at the Toronto International Film Festival. "It's weird, man. You start to get a complex after a

time. It's like, am I not the handsome type? Do they want me for all the 'Aarghhh'?" he said, putting on a menacing expression. "This seemed like a good hybrid between the two," offering him a role as a formidable, mysterious escaped prisoner with a wide romantic streak. "I couldn't hope for a better type of movie to have a romance in." Jason Reitman, who adapted Joyce Maynard's novel and directed, presented Brolin with an unusual challenge: Reitman continually told him to rein himself in. "It was an uneasy time, even though we had a blast," he said. "It was unnerving. Kate and I had a similar question about,

"Will we fill every moment?" with actorly business. "Jason was all about bringing it back, bringing it back. Kate and I both give 1,000 percent. We huddled up together in our insecurity. Not against Jason, but just like, 'This is so uncomfortable sometimes.'" "I just worked with Paul Thomas Anderson (on the film of Thomas Pynchon's psychedelic private-eye romp "Inherent Vice"), and it was just as satisfying, but totally chaotic. On the edge, walking this cliff line all the time. Whereas with Jason, it's a much more still experience. He was always tweaking me back to doing less and doing less and doing less. "As an actor, or maybe it's just

me, the paranoia was that it was just going to be boring as all hell. That people are going to say, 'I love what they're doing, but why is he not moving?' I'd move my hand like that," shifting it an inch. "And the next day he'd say, 'Don't do that with your hand.'" Ultimately, he realized that Reitman wanted him to be still because he trusted "the light in the eyes" to express Brolin's character. "It was more exposing for me than I've ever felt. It's like doing an interview with you if I just stood here," he said, standing up, "and didn't move and answered your questions and all that. I can't do that. Especially me," he said, returning to the sofa. "I talk

a lot. I'm animated." With his director limiting his gestures and advising him to tone it down, "I think I was working much harder interriorly than I normally would." What most intrigued him about Maynard's novel, he said, was that the menacing convict was "elusive." "There was always this feeling that this guy could turn around at any moment, that it's all been a manipulation," Brolin said. "Thinking about things like that (while in character) is important, especially if you're not doing anything. Otherwise it's dead eyes and you're thinking about lunch. What's it going to be today, lobster or steak?"

'Labor Day': Intense domestic potboiler

By ANN HORNADAY
The Washington Post

"Labor Day" turns out to be aptly titled, and not only because it transpires over the course of one hot-and-heavy summer's end in the mid-1980s. In this intense, exquisitely photographed domestic potboiler, both Kate Winslet and Josh Brolin deliver studiously serious performances, trying mightily not to betray how hard they're working to overcome the preposterous story in which they find themselves. Adapted by Jason Reitman from a novel by Joyce Maynard, this sexually charged wish-fulfillment fantasy — complete with troubling masochistic and Oedipal undertones — arrives with people already buzzing about its stand-out scene, in which Brolin's charismatic ex-convict teaches Winslet's depressive, agoraphobic housewife how to bake a peach pie (never before has the word "crumbing" been quite so erotically charged). But that turns out to be just one of the many impressive talents of Frank, who first meets Adele (Winslet) and her 13-year-

New on base

"Labor Day" is playing at:
Europe
Ansbach, Baumholder, Hohenfels, Ramstein, Spangdahlem, Stuttgart, Vilsack, Wiesbaden, Aviano and Vicenza.
Pacific
Yokota, Foster, Futenma, Hansen, Kadena, Kinser, Schwab, Courtney, Yongsan South Post No. 1, Casey, Henry, Kunsan and Osan.
Online: labordaymovie.com

old son, Henry (Gattlin Griffith), when they take a rare outing to buy school clothes. Having recently escaped from prison, Frank forces himself into their car and proceeds to hold them hostage in their airless, unkempt house. Soon, the taciturn, rough-hewn dreamboat is changing the oil in Adele's car, teaching Henry how to throw a baseball, waxing the floors and even ironing. It's not for nothing that, back in the variety store, he emerged from behind a rack of

superhero comics. If only Reitman, best known for such comedies as "Juno," "Up in the Air" and "Young Adult," had brought some wit or swiftness to bear on Maynard's painfully trite and retrograde plot, which only grows more contrived with the introduction of a creepily precocious girl whom Henry fatefully befriends at the local library. But "Labor Day" has been staged so handsomely, its actors delivering such alternately seductive and solemn performances, that the blame seems most fairly assigned to the source material, which resorts to facile captivity fantasies and cheap psychology, rather than the characters' own contradictions, to make its dramatic points. It's difficult to believe a word of "Labor Day," but then again you don't have to in order to luxuriate in Winslet and Brolin's bubbling, steaming chemistry. Still, between this, "Revolutionary Road" and "Mildred Pierce," it seems past time for Winslet to cast off the sackcloth and ashes of suburban angst and live it up a little. A girl can't live on pie and penance alone.

"Labor Day" is rated PG-13 for thematic material, brief violence and sexuality. Running time: 111 minutes.

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17:30, Mon - Wed 16:00, 17:45
Frozen (PG)-Thur & Fri 16:00, Sat & Sun
13:30, Mon - Wed 16:00
I, Frankenstein (PG13)- Thur 18:00,
Fri & Sat 22:45
Ride Along (PG13)- Thur 18:00, 20:30,
Fri 20:15, 22:30, Sat 20:30, 22:30, Sun
20:30, Mon - Wed 18:00, 20:30
Robocop (PG13)- Thur 16:00, 18:00,
20:30, Fri 15:45, 18:00, 20:15, 22:30, Sat
15:45, 18:00, 20:15, 22:30, Sun 13:30,
15:45, 18:00, 20:15, Mon - Wed 16:00,
18:00, 20:30
The Hobbit: The Desolation Of
Smaug (PG13)- Sat 13:30
In 2D: The Lego Movie (PG)- Fri
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WEEKEND

Europe

THE EUROPE EXPERIENCE



Courtesy of swiss-image.ch

St. Moritz in the Upper Engadine, Canton Graubunden, Switzerland, hosts horse racing on the frozen lake on the next three Sundays.

WATCH THIS:

Horse races on a frozen lake

On the next three Sundays, a fast-paced and daring winter sport takes place on the frozen lake of St. Moritz, Switzerland. On Feb. 9, 16 and 23, the city hosts The White Turf races, in which jockeys and horses dart along the lake at dizzying speed. The famous "St. Moritz roar" will go up as the competitors charge out of the gates, kicking up snow and ice as their hooves pound the race course. In the Skijöring race, racers grip harnesses tethered to horses and are dragged along on skis, risking being trampled.

Unless you are a professional jockey, White Turf can be enjoyed only as a spectator; about 35,000 attend each year. Visitors prepare for a day on the ice by swaddling themselves in warm clothing and ensuring that a restorative glass of champagne is always close at hand. In addition to the race, there will be gourmet catering, music and art exhibitions on the lake. Find more information at whiteturf.ch.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Scandinavian Sami Days

The term Sami refers to indigenous people living in the far northern reaches of Scandinavia for whom reindeer-herding remains central to everyday life. Important cultural gatherings for these people take place in both Norway and Sweden at this time of year.

Jokkmokk, Sweden, a municipality with the physical size of New Jersey but a population of just 5,000, is the site of the Sami's annual winter market through Saturday. This year marks the event's 409th anniversary, with a focus on the reindeer.

Visitors can peruse more than 500 market booths, sample locally produced foods, watch athletic challenges, take in a fashion show of clothing made of all-natural materials or enjoy the spectacle of a reindeer caravan. Lectures on folk medicine, mushrooming or the taming of reindeer will be offered, along with the opportunity to watch artisans at work.

Activities essential to book beforehand include dogsled rides, horseback riding, snowmobile safaris and helicopter tours; participation fees apply.

Learn more by visiting jokkmokksmarknad.se. Sami Week in Troms, Norway, is planned each year to coincide with the Sami National Day of Feb. 6, and runs for a full week. Activities center on the city's market square.

Events include the Norwegian lasso-throwing championships



Karen Bradbury

See the Europe Traveler blog at stripes.com/travel/europe-travel

on Saturday. Sunday's highlight is the reindeer racing championships, in which harnessed deer tow riders on skis.

Traditional foods and handicrafts are available at the market stalls, and exhibitions and films round out the program. See all activities on offer at msm.no/sami-week-in-tromsoe.41450.en.html.

Italian food and wine

Milan is probably better known for fashion than food, but through Monday, it will be gourmets making their way to the city in great numbers. They'll be coming for FOOD & WINE, a festival showcasing the best in wine and culinary creations.

Only in its second year, the festival has greatly expanded from its kickoff edition, and international wineries will be joining their Italian counterparts. Some 150 vintners will each offer three of their best bottles for sampling.

Twenty-four chefs will create a variety of mouth-watering dishes as festival attendees watch, and pastry chefs will show off their creations.

The event takes place at the Milano Congressi, with entrance through Gate 14, located at via Gattamelata 5. Hours are 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Sunday; and 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday. Tickets at the door cost 30 euros (about \$42) and include wine-tasting. Sampling the chefs' dishes costs 10 euros per plate. Learn more at foodwinefestival.it.

Chocolate lovers, on the other hand, might choose another great Italian city as their destination — Florence.

The Fiera del Cioccolato Artigianale, or artisanal chocolate fair, runs 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily through Feb. 16 at the Piazza Santa Maria Novella, where tastings and demonstrations of many a mortal's favorite treat take place. Special to the 2014 edition is the Tuscany Chocolate Corner, where masters from the region will offer their wares. Find the agenda at fieradelcioccolato.it (Italian only).

Affordable art

Do you long to adorn your walls with works of art, but fear their price tags would put most pieces out of reach? If you have 50 euros (about \$70) to spare, you just might be in luck.

That's the starting price for items on sale at the Affordable Art Fair, running through Monday at Brussels' Tour & Taxis.



Courtesy of fieradelcioccolato.it

At the Fiera del Cioccolato Artigianale, or artisanal chocolate fair, in Florence, Italy, all kinds of things made of chocolate have appeared, including these tasty "shoes."

More than 90 galleries will show works by hundreds of artists, with the maximum price for any object not to exceed 5,000 euros. To put first-time buyers at ease, the event's website carries practical, easy-to-digest information about what to expect at the fair, a glossary of art terminology and some considerations to make when planning a purchase.

In addition to browsing and buying the paintings, photos, prints, sculptures and more on display, visitors can take part in a silkscreen printing workshop, printing their original creations onto a canvas bag to take home.

A kids' space will teach children ages 3-12 about art and encourage creativity. A restaurant and wine bar will keep hunger

and thirst at bay.

The fair runs Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Monday, doors open at noon and close at 6 p.m. Adult admission at the door costs 13 euros, while those under 16 enter for free.

Can't make it to Brussels? Affordable Art Fairs, first launched in London in 1999, now take place throughout Europe and beyond. To date, more than one million people have visited an Affordable Art Fair.

Here are some dates to put in the travel diary: Milan, Italy, March 7-9; Battersea, London, March 13-16; Maastricht, Netherlands, April 3-6; London Hampstead, June 12-15.

Plan your trip with a visit to <http://affordableartfair.com>.



Looking for even more to do? For additional events, concerts and activities, go to stripes.com/military-life

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe

Cádiz: Spanish city made for strolling

By STEVEN BEARDSLEY
Stars and Stripes

Whether as a Phoenician settlement, a Moorish stronghold or the port of departure for two of Christopher Columbus' westward voyages, this thin spit of land in southwestern Spain has for millennia played an outside role in Western history.

So why, on a recent trip to the U.S. Navy base in Rota, did I carve out a measly two hours for Cádiz?

Maybe it was the cold December weather that sapped my enthusiasm. Maybe it was the fatigue from a week of traveling or the exhaustion from a recent stomach bug. Whatever the reason, I hadn't done my usual homework — no guide books this time, no restaurant recommendations or chats with friends who had already been. But after parking my rental car on the outskirts of Cádiz's old town and following the cobblestones into its center, I found I didn't need a lot of preparation to enjoy the city.

Cádiz is made for strolling, with a compact historical center marked by beautiful churches and seawalls of worn stone. Wrought-iron balconies float above its narrow alleys, which feed into elegant open plazas hemmed by palms. Small cafes and ice cream shops invite lounging.

I put my map away early and just walked, turning corners whenever I saw something interesting. I figured there was little chance of getting lost in a town surrounded on most sides by the sea.

I started at the cathedral, with its iconic twin cupolas and yellow-tile dome. A mishmash of architectural styles, the cathedral was built over a period of 100 years, as evidenced by the different-color stones. There are self-guided tours that come with an audio guide explaining the 18th-century origins of the church and the art of its side chapels.

Moving on, I walked past the flower vendors at Plaza Libertad before working my way north and west to the coast. Cutting through an edge of the large Parque Genovés, I found the waterfront and turned along it to the south, keeping the Atlantic Ocean to my right.

Cádiz is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Europe. Its prime location near the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea made it a favored settlement among ancient cultures, from the sea-going Phoenicians to the Carthaginians of North Africa and the Romans.

Only its modern history — after the Moors were pushed out in the 13th century — is Spanish. The bay became an important center for the Spanish Navy and for commercial shipping around the 15th century. Columbus began his second journey to the West Indies from Cádiz, and he was returned to the city in chains after disagreements during his third journey (he would persevere to begin a fourth journey from the bay in 1502).

Cádiz's wealth and strategic location invited attacks throughout the centuries. Sir Francis Drake sneaked his warships inside in 1587 to devastate Spanish ships being assembled for the massive armada that would sail for England the next year. Barbary pirates were long a scourge, picking off trade ships while dodging imperial navies.

The pale seawalls and perimeter forts that trace the outline of the town remain a testament to these former battles and the powers that once loomed in distant waters.

The sun set, night crept in and I turned back in the direction I came, passing the university and the beautiful Gran Teatro Falla, named for the celebrated Spanish composer Manuel de Falla, who is buried in Cádiz's cathedral.

Looking back, I only scratched the surface of Cádiz. Maybe next time I'll tour the city's museum to see the sarcophagi of ancient Phoenicians, who founded the city in the 12th century B.C. and, like today's mariners, roamed the Mediterranean for both trade and war.

Or maybe I'll just take an even longer walk.

beardsley.steven@stripes.com

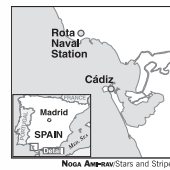


Photos courtesy of cadizturismo.com

Top: The cathedral in Cádiz, Spain, with its iconic cupolas and multihued facade, sits on the edge of the old town and offers exquisite Mediterranean Sea views.

Above left: Cádiz's prime location made it a favored settlement among ancient civilizations, and it is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Europe.

Above right: Cádiz's narrow stone walkways, surrounded by inspiring ancient architecture, invite exploration by locals and visitors alike.



NASA/Ames/Stars and Stripes

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Cádiz is located on the Bay of Cádiz, southwest of Rota. The drive is about 45 minutes from the city of Rota and half an hour from El Puerto de Santa Maria. Follow signs toward the city center.

COSTS

A tour of the cathedral costs 5 euros (about \$7), including the audio guide. I paid about 5 euros to park in a city garage off Avenida del Puerto, on the eastern edge of the old city.

FOOD

Cádiz has several restaurants from which to choose.

INFORMATION

Website: andalucia.com/cities/cadiz.htm

— Steven Beardsley



The seawalls and perimeter forts that trace the outline of Cádiz's old town remain a testament to the power of the foreign navies and pirates once lurking in nearby waters.

STEVEN BEARDSLEY/Stars and Stripes

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe

After Hours: Germany

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

If you are into beef and bikes, there's a new steakhouse in town for you.

Tower 66 Steakhouse & Bar, which opened just a couple of months ago in Böblingen, Germany, is pure Americana. The menu is simple and delicious: steaks, ribs, burgers and all the typical trimmings.

The decor is sure to make you feel at home as well. There's the obligatory American flag on one wall. There's a display of cool-looking pocket knives behind the bar.

The burgers even come with a little American flag on a toothpick.

If that's not enough, the restaurant is directly next to a beautiful Harley Davidson shop, which you can wander through after you load up on a succulent dry-aged steak. What could be more American?

During a recent visit to Tower 66 for lunch, I almost felt like I was back home. The menu was familiar, the English-speaking staff was friendly and there was just the right amount of tacky decor.

But as I chewed on my surf and turf burger, a tasty affair topped with an interesting peanut butter sauce, it gradually dawned on me that something was amiss. It was the clientele.

They weren't wearing Levis and T-shirts. No ball caps or guys wearing the jerseys of their favorite football teams.

At Tower 66, the only thing that'll tip you off that you're still in the well-heeled Stuttgart area are the somewhat-precious patrons wearing their sleek European-cut suits, and a lot of other guys in tight pants and pointy shoes.

I suspect they must have drifted over from the Ferrari and Maserati dealership that shares a parking lot with Tower 66.

That's the other great thing about Tower 66: You're surrounded by amazing vehicles you can only dream of owning.

Ferrari Testarossas on one side, Harleys on the other, and a big, fat burger joint in between.

vandiver.john@stripes.com



PHOTOS BY JOHN VANDIVER/Stars and Stripes

Tower 66 Steakhouse & Bar in Böblingen, Germany, serves a thick burger topped with an American flag alongside crispy, curly fries. The menu is loaded with beef specialties, and prices are reasonable.



The Harley Davidson shop next door to the Tower 66 Steakhouse & Bar makes for a nice place to browse after a meal. The store has a host of bikes for sale and all sorts of Harley memorabilia.

TOWER 66 STEAKHOUSE & BAR

Location: Wolfgang-Brumme-Allee in Böblingen. The restaurant is directly off Autobahn 81 exit 23.

Hours: 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 5:30-12:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday; 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday; closed Thursdays.

Prices: Meals range from burg-

ers costing 8 euros to steaks in the 25-euro range. Daily specials usually are priced at less than 10 euros.

Dress: Casual.

More information: Website: tower66-steakhouse.de. Make reservations by phoning: (+49) (0) 703-1 3098400.

— John Vandiver

Dried fruit deserves a second look

By RUSS PARSONS
Los Angeles Times

Dried fruit has a nasty image problem. Roxana Jullapat of Cooks County restaurant in Los Angeles says that merely putting the word "raisin" on the menu is enough to kill sales for a dish completely. Interestingly, the raisins themselves had no effect. People seem to like them, as long as they're added on the down-low.

And yet all the really good cooks I know love dried fruit. Cookbook author Maria Speck polled colleagues recently about which dried fruits they had in their pantries. I had dark and golden raisins, currants, apricots, cranberries, sour cherries, figs and prunes.

But other cooks listed so many I had overlooked — apples, mangoes, bananas, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries and barberries.

So why do people hate dried fruit?

Not long ago, even raisins were regarded as exotic, reserved for special occasions. Until the 1870s, almost all raisins had to be imported from Europe. It wasn't until the birth of the gigantic vineyards of California's Central Valley that they began to become commonplace in America.

The Santa Clara Valley south of San Francisco proved to be just as hospitable for prunes. In 1960, Napa's prunes were more valuable than its grapes.

Do we take dried fruit for granted today because they've become so familiar?

I don't. They taste too good to ignore just because of some silly fashion. Particularly at this time of year when there's not a lot of sweetness to be had in the produce aisle, dried fruit can come to the rescue in both savory dishes and desserts.

Think like a Sicilian and combine raisins with salty or pungent flavors. I made a pasta the other day with broccoli, salted anchovies, raisins and pine nuts. Or toss a handful of raisins into a kale and wild rice salad to offset the dark greens' slight bitterness. (Steep them in warm water or brandy to soften a little before cooking.) Raisins or prunes are great with braised meats; just add them close to the end so they soften but don't fall apart.

Sweets? Besides the obvious — scattering raisins in cookies, cakes, puddings and even pie fillings — I always have a jar of prune compote in the refrigerator during the winter. Serve the prunes and their syrup with a spoonful of yogurt and you've got a terrific dessert that's always on hand.

And if you love dried fruits as much as I do, you might even have them for breakfast.



The eatery has Harleys on one side and Ferraris on the other.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Meet the Purr-isians

Feline fanciers find Paris' Cat Café a warm, furry hangout

BY LEAH LARKIN

Special to Stars and Stripes

Felines, 12 of them, all colors and sizes, lounge in windows, on chairs, benches and in kitty beds. Some are sociable, others playful. But many are in deep slumber, the favorite cat pastime.

Welcome to Le Café des Chats (Cat Café) in the Marais district of Paris. This unusual eatery opened in September and is modeled after a similar café in Tokyo.

In Japan, the idea was to provide animal lovers who live in cramped city apartments and cannot have pets the opportunity to socialize with cats. Margaux Gandelon, founder and owner of the Parisian café, saw the need for such a place in her hometown.

She touts the health benefits of "purr therapy."

"Purring produces vibrations, which relieve arthritis and rheumatism, which lower your blood pressure and your heartbeat," she told a Reuters reporter.

And, according to numerous scientific studies, pets help protect against cancer by boosting the immune system.

Since I have three cats, I was not in need of purr therapy, but as a cat lover, I had to visit the café. Apparently many customers are like me — not just pet-



Courtesy of Café des Chats

Cats are welcome to sit with patrons of Le Café des Chats, or Cat Café, in Paris. However, visitors are not allowed to feed them.

starved Parisians.

"We get many Asians, Anglo-Saxons, people from all over France," the café host told me. The popularity of sharing a coffee or a light meal with cats has been overwhelming.

The two-level café is small, with a capacity for just 45 customers. According to an article in a French newspaper, more than 300 potential patrons were turned away on opening day. Reservations are a must. There was nary an empty seat during my December visit.

The café's host went over the rules as we arrived: Don't feed

the cats. Don't let the cats drink from your cup or glass. Don't disturb the cats if they are sleeping. Photos are allowed, but no flash. Before entering the rooms with the cats, you must disinfect your hands — a dispenser is on the counter.

Months of negotiations with Parisian health authorities preceded the café's opening. Strict hygiene regulations are enforced. No cats in the kitchen. Waiters and kitchen staff are not permitted to touch the cats. Litter boxes are in a separate room.

The cats' welfare is also foremost. All the cats come from pet rescue centers and are selected for their "sociability." A veterinarian makes regular visits. The cats are not available for adoption and will make their home at the café "until they are no longer happy with us or simply getting too old and in need of rest and quiet," said Anne-Sophie Brard, Gandelon's mother, who helps at the café. At that time, they will be placed in a "loving home."

"We work hand in hand with three associations (shelters and cat welfare organizations) and will soon use the café as a means to find caring homes for their lovely cats, angoras and strays," said Brard.

My husband reluctantly accompanied me to the feline paradise. He claims to be a dog person and frequently lectures me on the superiority of canines.

Ha! I have caught him talking baby talk to my kitties.

While he showed no interest in the cats, he liked the café's ambience and food. The building dates to the 15th century, when it was an *auberge* (inn). Comfortable armchairs, couches and tables spread out in a series of small, cozy rooms

all under a vaulted ceiling in the

lower level — make it seem more like a welcoming home than a restaurant. Of course, the cats add an extra honey touch.

Leah Larkin lives in France and can be contacted through her website, leahlarkin.com, or blog address, <http://talesandtravel.com>.

KNOW & GO

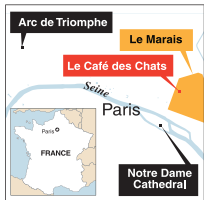
Getting there: Le Café des Chats is located at 16 rue Michel Le Comte, Paris 3ème. Take the subway to Rambuteau or Arts and Metiers.

Times: Daily noon to 10 p.m. Reservations are essential. The lower level has more ambience, but during our visit, most of the cats were in the rooms on the floor above.

Food: Desserts, salads and tarts, along with teas, coffee and wine. My husband had a seafood salad. I ordered a tart with caramelized onions, blue cheese, cranberries and pecans. Both were very good and reasonably priced.

Information: Website: lecafedeschats.fr for menu details and prices. Brunch is offered on weekends. For reservations, write reservations@lecafedeschats.fr.

— Leah Larkin



BEV SCHULING/Stars and Stripes



LEAH LARKIN/Special to Stars and Stripes

Patrons are asked not to disturb the cats while they are sleeping.



Cats lounge in one of the rooms of Le Café des Chats.

LEAH LARKIN
SPECIAL TO STARS AND STRIPES

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Even budget airlines pad profits

For much of my traveling life, I never considered flying within Europe. It simply wasn't affordable. But today's budget airlines make that kind of thinking so 20th century. Nowadays, Europe's vagabonds are jet-setters. Still, even budget airlines can nick you on fees. Here are a few tips:

Ryanair and easyJet are two of the most established budget airlines; both serve many destinations across the continent. Meanwhile, dozens of smaller, niche airlines stick to a more focused flight plan. For instance, Condor and German Wings are headquartered in Germany, while Wizz Air centers on Eastern Europe.

Budget airlines typically offer flights for about \$50 to \$250, but you can find incredible deals if your timing is right. For example, Ryanair flies from London to dozens of European cities sometimes for less than \$30. To get the lowest fares, book long in advance, as the cheapest seats sell out fast (aside from occasional surprise sales).

Before taking any long trip, compare all of your options — trains, flights, and even buses and car rental. Start your search on Skyscanner, which provides a fast way to determine which airlines serve the route you want. Other good search engines are Kayak, Dohop, Himpunk and Momondo. Once you determine

which carrier covers the trip, go to that airline's website and book the flight there.

Be suspicious of the first rate that's quoted, as additional



Rick Steves

fees await with every click of the mouse. Prepare to get dinged for paying with a credit card (even though there's no cash option), reserving a seat, checking in and

printing your boarding pass at the airport (instead of online), priority boarding and carrying an infant on board. Budget airlines also pad their profits by bombarding you with ads online and via email after you buy your ticket, and selling overpriced food and drinks on board.

As in the U.S., baggage fees can add up. Many low-cost airlines use smaller dimensions for carry-ons, forcing more passengers to check baggage for a fee. Sometimes it costs extra if your bag is over a certain weight limit. One discount airline I flew had a mere 10-kilo (22-pound) carry-on limit. Luckily, I pack light.

Tickets are usually nonrefundable and nonchangeable. Many airlines take only online bookings, so it can be hard to find someone to talk to if problems

arise. And, as these are relatively young companies, it's not uncommon for budget carriers to go out of business or cancel a slow-selling route unexpectedly.

Pay attention to which airport your flight flies into. Ryanair's flights to "Frankfurt" actually

take you to Hahn, 75 miles away. Be sure to factor in the additional time and costs of getting from a faraway airport to where you want to be.

Despite their hassles, budget flights present a world of possibilities. If you have a flexible

schedule, consider keeping an eye out for special fares and letting that guide your itinerary.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes Europe travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

Restaurant Directory

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WEEKEND

Pacific

THE PACIFIC EXPERIENCE

WINTER ACTIVITIES OFF BASE

Events are as accurate as possible at press time. Since times or event schedules can change, please verify events before attending.

Japan

OTARU YUKI-AKARI NO MICHİ (SNOW CANDLE) (Hokkaido): Feb. 7-16, 5-9 p.m.; features 200 floating candles on canals in Otaru; eight-minute walk from JR Otaru Station.

TOWADAKO LAKE WINTER FESTIVAL 2014 (Aomori prefecture): Feb. 7-March 2, 3-9 p.m.; 11 a.m. weekends; Towadako Lake celebrates "Snow and Light Fantasia" with a snow-covered lakeside and illuminated ships on the lake, plus food booths, live music and fireworks after 8 p.m. daily.

KITA KARUZAWA CANDLE & FIREWORKS FESTIVAL (Gunma prefecture): Feb. 8, featuring 4,000 candles on the snow along with fireworks at Kita Karuzawa Fureai Hiroba, 20-minute ride from Naganohara Kusatsuguchi Station on Agatsuma Line.

SHOWA VILLAGE WINTER FESTIVAL (Gunma prefecture): Feb. 8, 4:30-10 p.m.; enjoy tubing and snowmobiles along with fireworks at 7 p.m.; Showa Village Sogo Undo Koen, 20-minute ride from JR Numata Station on Joetsu Line.

SNOW LANTERN FESTIVAL (Aomori prefecture): Feb. 8-11, until 9 p.m.; one of five greatest snow festivals in northern Japan featuring 150 Japanese garden-style lanterns illuminated by candles and snow sculptures are constructed in the Hirasaki Park and the grounds of Hirasaki Castle.

IWATE SNOW FESTIVAL (Iwate prefecture): Through Feb. 11, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; winter sports including horse-sledding and snowmobiling, plus illuminations 7:30 p.m.; Koiwai Farm, Shizukishiro town, 10 miles from Morioka I.C. on Tohoku Express or bus from JR Morioka Station.

SAPPORO SNOW FESTIVAL (Hokkaido prefecture): Through Feb. 11, 65th annual festival featuring snow statues, ice sculptures and more; www.snowfes.com/english.

YOKOHAMA REDBRICK WAREHOUSE ART & ICE SKATING: Through Feb. 23, 1-10 p.m. weekdays, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. weekends; art with lights designed by Maki Kujirima; 15-minute walk from JR Kan-nai Station.

SORA NIWA ICE PARK - GINZA (Tokyo): Through March 2, 11 a.m.-10 p.m.; rink on the roof of Matsuya Ginza Department Store; www.matsuya.com/foreigner/en.

AKASAKA SACAS ICE SKATING RINK (Tokyo): Through March 2, noon-9 p.m. weekdays, 11 a.m. weekends; illuminations start 4 p.m.; Akasaka Station on Marunouchi Line or eight-minute walk from Akasaka Mitsuke Station on Ginza Line.

FUJI-Q HIGHLAND ICE SKATING (Yamanashi prefecture): Through March 30, closed Feb. 18; 5-6-1, Nishihara, Fuji-Yoshida city; www.fujita.jp/en.
SAYAMA SKI & SNOWBOARD (Saitama prefecture): Through April 6; indoor ski and snowboarding; 2167 Kami-yamaguchi, Iokorozawa city, Seibu Kyujo-mae Station, Seibu Line.

South Korea

JIRISAN NAMWON BARAEONG SNOWFLAKE FESTIVAL (Jeollabuk-do): Through Feb. 9, activities including ice and snow sledding, snowman making, snowball fights; take express bus from Central City Terminal for Newton Express Terminal, then take a taxi to Jirisan Mountain Herb

Valley; free; tinyurl.com/pwjameq.
SEOUL SNOW FESTIVAL: Through Feb. 9, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., until 9 p.m. on Fri.-Sun.; featuring snow-themed exhibition and more at Peace Plaza at the War Memorial of Korea, Songgok Station.

YANGPYEONG ICE FESTIVAL (Gyeonggi-do): Through Feb. 17; featuring activities including riding a tractor and ice fishing at Yangpyeong Nodri village in Yangpyeong-gun; Yongmun Station on Jungang Line.

GANGHWA ICEFISH FESTIVAL (Incheon): Through Feb. 23, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; featuring hands-on programs including icefish fishing, old-fashioned snow sledding, food booths and more at Hangcheon Fishing Site in Hwangcheon-gi; 15,000 won adults, preschool kids and younger free.

CHEONGPYEONG SLEDDING & ICEFISH FESTIVAL (Gyeonggi-do): Through Feb. 23; featuring winter attractions; 30-minute ride from Seoul and Chuncheon.

EVERLAND SNOW FESTIVAL (Yongin-si): Through Feb. 28; featuring seasonal activities including a snow tubing course and run and live performances at Everland; www.everland.com.



Courtesy of Japan Camping Car Show

SEE THIS: Japan Camping Car Show 2014

This event, Feb. 7 to 11, has booths from 99 companies showcasing camping cars, outdoor equipment, tourism information and more at Makuhari Messe, Chiba, Japan.

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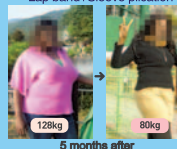
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For additional events, concerts and activities, go to stripes.com/military-life

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific



WELCOME SPRING: Hachinohe Enburi Festival

This festival is Feb. 17 to 20 in Hachinohe, Aomori prefecture, Japan. About 40 groups of Enburi, wearing happi coats and footwear made of straw, gather at Chojasan Shima Shrine. For more: tinyurl.com/ki89hp2.

Photos courtesy of
Hachinohe Tourism & Convention Association



Koji SASAHARA/AP

A visitor takes a picture of hina dolls depicting Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy, second from left, at Kyugetsu dolls company in Tokyo in January. The dolls are on display to celebrate the upcoming Doll Festival, or Girls' Day, March 3.

ON BASE

Events are as accurate as possible at press time. Since times or event schedules can change, please verify events before attending.

Japan

Atsugi ITT Tours has an overnight ski trip on Feb. 16-17. Go rock climbing with **Yokosuka** Outdoor Recreation Center on Feb. 9. Snowshoe on Mount Fuji with **Zama's** Outdoor Recreation Center trip on Feb. 23.

Guam

See PG-rated "Turbo" at Hotspot at

7:30 p.m. Feb. 8 and "Planes" at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 15 at **Andersen** Air Force Base. Rec'n-Crew at **Naval Base Guam** has a hike to Taguan Point on Feb. 13, sign up by 1 p.m. Feb. 10.

Okinawa

Camp **Foster** Tours has a trip to see a Japanese baseball game on Feb. 22 and one to Shuri Castle and Naha city on Feb. 23.

For more activities, go to stripes.com/military-life

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WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific

Food for thought

Bangkok's Cabbages and Condoms offers Thai cuisine and a safety message

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE
Stars and Stripes

Despite the fact that condoms save more lives than North Korea has soldiers, people still blush when buying them at their local convenience store.

Cabbages and Condoms Restaurant in Bangkok, Thailand, aims to change that, taking the shame out of sex with a latex carnival of things made from condoms: lights, giant Christmas trees, dresses, hats, police officers, a life-size Santa Claus and even Santa's reindeer.

Its food is "guaranteed not to cause pregnancy," as its motto states, but will satisfy that desire for quality authentic Thai cuisine at an affordable price. The money raised from the restaurant goes to Thailand's nonprofit Population and Community Development Association, which funnels it back into the community for health-related initiatives. So your dining experience is not only tasty and entertaining but also altruistic.

Cabbages and Condoms was created by the PDA after its founding in 1974 to educate, promote family planning and generate income to support PDA activities, which include rural outreach, targeted campaigns and contraceptive distribution. The restaurant not only became a place where local young people could learn a trade and make money to support their families, but also a great way to spread the safe sex message and get condoms into the community.

Located conveniently in one of metropolitan Bangkok's main business districts, Cabbages and Condoms Restaurant — with its colorful, fun and festive atmosphere — has blossomed into a condom-flowered phenomenon and a must-see for travelers visiting the beautiful Thai capital. It has spawned 11 satellite restaurants in Thailand, resorts, hotels and even a franchise in Kumamoto, Japan's shopping arcade.

The chefs at Cabbages and Condoms use local Thai staples such as lemon grass, hot chilies, ginger and green peppercorns in their cooking to give each meal that authentic taste. Their specialty dishes include Massaman Curry, which is chicken, beef or lamb sweet curry with potatoes; green curry, Phad Thai Goong Sod, which is stir-fried rice noodles with shrimp; Po Pia Tod, which is deep fried vegetable and glass noodle rolls; and Tom Yam Goong, a spicy shrimp soup.

Meals at Cabbages and Condoms cost anywhere from 120 to 470 baht, or about \$3.60 to \$14.29, but the majority is on the lower end of that scale. Its Satay Moo and Kai, which is marinated grilled pork and chicken skew-



PHOTOS BY MATTHEW M. BURKE/Stars and Stripes

Above: A cop made of condoms greets visitors to Bangkok's Cabbages and Condoms Restaurant. **Right:** A model with condom hair and wearing latex evening wear stands next to a sign that reminds patrons of the restaurant's mission.



Moo and Nuea Dad Diew, a deep fried sun-dried pork or beef tenderloin, is cooked to a crispy, chewy perfection at Cabbages and Condoms.



Gang Phed Ped Yang, or roast duck curry with green pepper and coconut, numbs the tongue yet doesn't mask the flavor.



Phad Pak Ruam Mit, or sauteed mixed vegetables, costs less than the equivalent of \$4.



A heaping plate of Poo Nim Phad Phrik Thai Dum, which is soft-shell crab stir-fried with black pepper and bell chili, costs 350 baht.

CABBAGES AND CONDOMS RESTAURANT

Where: 10 Sukhumvit Soi 12, Bangkok, Thailand 10110

Phone: Reservations are not required but are suggested for large parties, (02) 229-4610

Cost: Meal prices vary from 120 to 470 baht, or about \$3.60 to \$14.29, but the majority is on the lower end.

Website: pda.or.th/restaurant

— Matthew M. Burke

Other notable dishes include the Phad Pak Ruam Mit, which is sauteed mixed vegetables (120 baht); Tung Thong, which is deep fried chicken and black mushrooms in flour bags (120 baht); and Poo Nim Phad Phrik Thai Dum, which is soft-shell crab stir-fried with black pepper and bell chili (350 baht).

Cabbages and Condoms has an extensive wine menu starting at 220 baht per glass and liquor menu starting at 100 baht for a glass of Thai whiskey, or 140 Baht for Jameson. Desserts are under 100 Baht generally, except for a banana split at 150 baht.

After the meal, patrons receive a condom — for men or women — instead of a dinner mint. You can come to Cabbages and Condoms for any number of reasons, whether it be for a drink, good food or a laugh at the expense of its Cops In Rubbers. One thing is for certain, however, you can feel good about every dollar spent; you could actually save a life.

burke.matt@stripes.com

NEXT WEEK



Return to Thailand and bask in the pristine turquoise waters and blissfully isolated community of the tropical Railay Peninsula.

ers (150 baht), are as good as any you will find in Thailand. They are of the highest quality, especially when compared with the skewers hawked all over Bangkok by street vendors. They also stand up to most other Thai

food restaurants in and outside of Thailand.

The Moo and Nuea Dad Diew, a deep fried sun-dried pork or beef tenderloin (170/250 baht), was equally delicious, choked to a crispy, chewy perfection.

Another special dish was the Gang Phed Ped Yang, which is roast duck curry with green pepper and coconut (250 baht). The spice numbs the tongue yet doesn't mask the flavor of the duck, which melts in your mouth.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific

Big trouble in little Chinese city

Mainland tourists swamp gambling mecca Macau during Lunar holiday

By KELVIN CHAN
The Associated Press

In a scene from the James Bond movie "Skyfall," the British superspy arrives in Macau aboard a small raft that glides under an arched bridge, past hundreds of floating paper lanterns and through an illuminated dragon head to reach a casino.

When I made the trip to the tiny Chinese gambling mecca at the height of the Lunar New Year holiday on Monday, it was decidedly less glamorous.

I joined crowds of fellow travelers, mostly from mainland China, cramming into an aging ferry terminal in Hong Kong to board a hydrofoil ferry for the hourlong trip. Elsewhere, tens of thousands jammed border checkpoints with mainland China.

The holiday, which began Jan. 31, is the busiest time of year for the former Portuguese colony, which Beijing regained control of in 1999 and is the only place in China where casinos are legal.

Celebrations include fireworks, lion dances and parades, but the main draws are the 35 casinos that have made Macau the world's biggest gambling market. While tens of millions of mainland Chinese visit Macau annually, numbers surge during the holiday, often referred to as the world's biggest migration, when Chinese believe their luck at the baccarat tables is strongest. The result is extreme congestion on many stops on the tourist trail in this city of just 30 square kilometers, leaving infrastructure straining and local residents simmering.

I've visited Macau dozens of

times over the past few years from my base in Hong Kong, but have avoided going during the Lunar New Year holiday. This year, I decided to brave the hordes of Chinese gamblers to see in the Year of the Horse.

"From an auspicious perspective, this is the time of the year to come here to visit," said Chris Wieners, managing director of Hogo Marketing, which works with casinos. He also runs another business bringing tourists to town for big events. "The feeling is almost like they can't lose; you have to win."

He cautioned that when visiting Macau during the holiday, there are "more cons than pros": travel is a "nightmare," prices are inflated and hotels are full. Authorities in Macau, population 598,000, were expecting 2.6 million visitors over the week-long holiday period, according to local broadcaster TDM.

The influx is part of a broader tide of visitors drawn by the breakneck expansion of Macau's casino industry over the past decade. About 29 million people visited Macau last year, most from mainland China, and their gambling helped the city rake in \$45 billion in casino revenue last year. That's about seven times the amount on the Las Vegas Strip and more even than the total earned by all 12,042 casinos in the U.S.

Foreign operators including Sands China, the Asian arm of U.S. billionaire Sheldon Adelson's casino company, are spending billions to build a slew of new mega resorts in Cotai, reclaimed swampland between two islands that's Asia's version of the Las

Tourists walk through the lobby of the Wynn Macau casino during a Chinese New Year celebration. The annual holiday is the busiest time of year for the former Portuguese colony, which became a special Chinese region in 1999.

PHOTOS BY VINCENT YU/AP



A crowd watches a lion dance at The Ruins of St. Paul's, arguably Macau's most famous landmark and a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Mainland Chinese tourists walk through famous tourist spot Senado Square on the second day of the Chinese New Year in Macau.

Vegas Strip.

Resorts already there include Sands China's flagship, Venetian Macao, where the vast gambling floor was thronged even though it wasn't yet noon. So was the mall upstairs, where shops line a faux Venetian canal complete with singing gondoliers.

The crowds were too much for me, so I hopped on a free shuttle bus back to peninsular Macau to see two of the most popular tourist sights, Senado Square and

the Ruins of St. Paul's, part of the city's historic center granted World Heritage Status in 2005. The cobblestoned square's pastel neo-classical buildings give off a Mediterranean vibe, a reminder of centuries spent under Portuguese rule.

From here it's usually an easy walk through winding, narrow lanes to the hilltop ruins of St. Paul's. Not today. Police have set up crowd control barriers and rerouted traffic near the square.

The lanes are jammed with tourists. At one point it's shoulder-to-shoulder.

The congestion infuriates some residents.

"The ruthless pace of mainlanders conflicts with the local way of life," newspaper vendor Ben Lai Hou-kei told the South China Morning Post of Hong Kong.

Paradoxically, while visitor numbers are up, casino profits might not get a bump, industry insiders say.

"The very rich people with the highest net worth will avoid going during Chinese New Year," said Hoffman Ma, deputy chairman of Success Universe Group, which runs Ponte 16, a casino-resort where attractions include a Michael Jackson-themed gallery featuring one of his white crystal-studded gloves.

Instead, analysts said, wealthy Chinese are now opting to visit a week or more after the holiday starts. These high-rollers, whose visits are arranged by junket operators, account for about two-thirds of Macau's casino revenue.

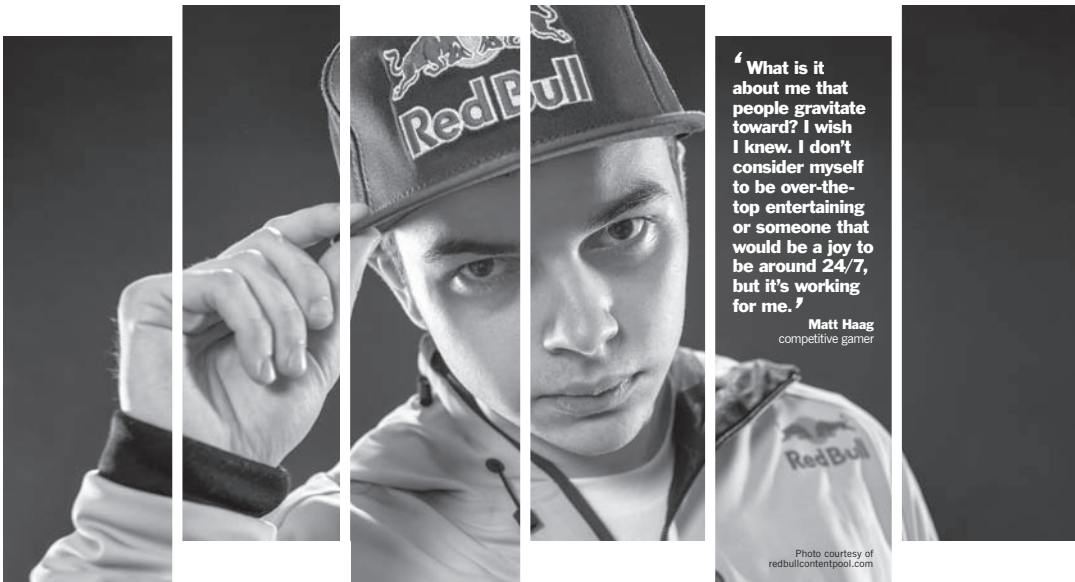
At the Casino Lisboa, near Macau's downtown, gamblers jammed the crowded casino floor, where minimum bets at some tables went as high as \$1,000 Hong Kong dollars (\$129) — pricier by Vegas standards.

Cherry Yang, a hotel worker from Shanghai and novice gambler, placed a few bets.

"I said, 'Just tell me what's the easiest game to play,'" said Yang, who was steered to the dice game Sic Bo. "I lost 2,000 renminbi (\$300) in 15 to 20 minutes," she said with a chuckle.

Though unfazed by the crowds, Yang and husband, Allan, complained about waiting "an hour" for a cab to go from the Lisboa to Fisherman's Wharf, a theme park, a journey they could have done in 30 minutes by foot.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



‘What is it about me that people gravitate toward? I wish I knew. I don’t consider myself to be over-the-top entertaining or someone that would be a joy to be around 24/7, but it’s working for me.’

Matt Haag
competitive gamer

Photo courtesy of
redbullcontentpool.com

If he plays it, they will watch

Pro gamers enjoy celebrity, income from heeding the ‘Call’

By JOHN KEILMAN
Chicago Tribune

Matt Haag used to be just another suburban kid going to high school, working at McDonald’s and aggravating his parents by spending endless hours on his Xbox.

Today the lanky, dark-eyed 21-year-old is a global celebrity to an enormous number of young people, very few of whom know him as Matt. They call him Nadeshot, master of the virtual submachine gun, a guy who makes a six-figure living playing the video game “Call of Duty.”

Haag is among a handful of Chicago-area men who have found a lucrative niche in the booming world of competitive video gaming. Under the name OpTic Gaming, they have snared corporate sponsors, built flourishing YouTube channels and earned a small fortune in tournament winnings.

When they play, even in minor online matches, tens of thousands of people watch. When they feud, their gamer handles incite some of the hottest trending on Twitter. Even Haag, a player so popular that fans pay \$4.99 a month just to watch him practice, doesn’t fully understand it.

“What is it about me that people gravitate toward? I wish I knew,” he said between rounds of a recent online tournament. “I don’t consider myself to be over-the-top entertaining or someone that would be a joy to be around 24/7, but it’s working for me.”

The money and attention are signs that after decades of hype, “eSports” are finally putting a digital foot in the mainstream. Fans are packing sports arenas to

watch top gamers battle for prize money. Major League Gaming, an organization that broadcasts matches online, saw consumption of its video more than triple last year, reaching 54 million hours.

Competitive video gaming burst from the computer lab in 1972 with barroom games of Pong, and tournaments swiftly followed. Kotaku, a gaming news website, says Stanford students mounted the first one later that year, featuring a game called “Spacewar!”

A few people made money from arcade-based competitions, but journalist Rod Breslau of the website onGamers said the scene didn’t really take off until the late 1990s, when a virtual shoot-’em-up called “Quake” allowed players to battle over the Internet.

“The whole industry is based off of that,” he said.

Computer video games such as “StarCraft” became wildly popular in Asia during the 2000s, Breslau said, especially in South Korea, where television stations broadcast matches, major tech corporations handed out sponsorships and top gamers became celebrities.

Competitive gaming was much more casual in the U.S., but communities formed around a few games, including “Call of Duty,” a bestselling title that gives players the perspective of military operatives as they chase each other around bullet-pocked landscapes.

One of those caught up in the fledgling culture was Hector Rodriguez, a 20-something gamer from Wheeling, Ill. He joined a few friends in online matches and got hooked on the strategy and teamwork

demanding by the game.

But in 2009, he moved away from competition to focus on the game in a different way. Under the name of his team, OpTic Gaming, he put videos onto YouTube showing everything from “Call of Duty” strategies to tournament highlights to equipment reviews.

He quickly became aware of a ravenous appetite for content related to the game: One early effort, an artfully edited montage of sniper kills accompanied by a rap and metal soundtrack, has attracted nearly 6 million views to date.

YouTube pays content creators a slice of the advertising revenue their videos bring in. Google did not respond to a query seeking comment, but various YouTube users peg the rate at roughly \$2 per 1,000 views, with some getting significantly more.

— and Rodriguez saw enough potential in the venture to quit his insurance job and devote himself full time to OpTic.

“For nine months, I didn’t get paid a single dime,” said Rodriguez, now 33. Rodriguez decided to extend awareness of the OpTic Gaming brand by forming a new competitive team. After asking around, he offered a spot to Haag.

Haag built his gaming chops playing various titles, but switched his allegiance to “Call of Duty” in 2007 when his parents gave him the game for Christmas.

He was an instant addict, playing up to eight hours a day. He developed reflexes fast and precise enough to dispatch foes a split second after they appeared on screen, and soon, he was winning a few hundred dollars at small competitions.

That changed after he joined OpTic.

Live video game tournaments had become major attractions, complete with giant video screens, elaborate stages and play-by-play announcers, and in 2011, a year after Haag graduated from high school, he and three teammates took first place in a Los Angeles competition put on by Activision, the publisher of “Call of Duty.” Their prize was \$400,000.

Haag said he viewed the win as a freak occurrence, not something he could count on to make a living. So at Rodriguez’s urging, he concentrated on building a fan base online.

“He explained how they were monetizing their content on YouTube, and they were making ad revenue every single month,” Haag said. “It was a solid stream of income you could rely on every paycheck.”

Haag pumped out videos, mixing game-play lessons and tournament travelogues with reflections on heavy subjects such as death and religion. His audience was modest at first, but in mid-2013, after a year of good tournament results, the release of a new “Call of Duty” game and a move to the “OpTic House” — a home and practice space that team members share in the northwest suburbs — the numbers exploded. Today his channel has received more than 65 million views.

Haag found other income sources, too, from a sponsorship with energy drink-maker Red Bull to a channel on Twitch.tv, a website that lets fans watch their gaming idols practice and play for hours on end — gamers get a piece of the ad revenue and the \$4.99 monthly subscription fee that allows fans to comment on the action.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES

For those unfamiliar with "Might & Magic," the series is a first-person computer RPG with very few frills and a punishing difficulty level that rewards patience and proper planning. "M&MX" is no different. Gamers won't find romance options, unlimited potions or lengthy cut scenes here. What they will find, however, is a challenging game full of close-encounters, deep dungeons that might take several attempts to conquer and a series of areas that are designed to ensure you will lose. Fans of games like "Demon's Souls" or "Dark Souls" should feel right at home with the challenge level in "M&MX."

The game starts with players having to create a party of four adventurers from a pool of 12, each with their own abilities, strengths and weaknesses. This isn't just lip service, either. Party creation and what classes are taken will greatly affect play style. Like many old-school games, it's very possible to create a party that will make the game far more difficult than it has to be.

The classes range from the typical warrior types that soak up damage and the magic-wielding glass cannons to the more mixed classes like Crusaders and Bladedancers. Some classes will have access to skills and schools of magic that others won't. Picking enough classes to have each type of magic is highly recommended, as there is very little overlap in what each does. For instance, if the party lacks someone who can use Earth magic, the team will lack a powerful (and fairly necessary) healing spell. Choose wisely.

After a short story segment, the band of heroes (inexplicably called Raiders in the game) are set ashore in a small seaside town in the world of Ashan and set loose to do pretty much whatever they'd like. Quests can be picked up from townsfolk or found through exploration and generally can be tackled at any point. Again, the challenge level comes into play here. Some areas are far too difficult to venture into right away, so while exploration is the entire point of the game, saving often is really recommended. There will be many areas where creatures lurk right around a corner that can crush a lower-level party right away, and the areas are not marked as such. Trial and error are a big part

A legacy of pain

'Might & Magic X' delivers on old-school difficulty

By MICHAEL S. DARNELL / Stars and Stripes

"Might & Magic X: Legacy" is a tough-as-nails role-playing game with few concessions given over to modern game design. It's a throwback to when computer games required vast amounts of reading, note taking and even spelling in order to be successful. It's exceptionally challenging, utterly devoid of hand-holding, and a game that will not be completed in a weekend.

And that's why it's quietly become the best game of the fledgling New Year.

This entry in the long-running "Might & Magic" series from Limbic Entertainment and publisher Ubisoft is really more of a resurrection than a sequel, as the series had lain dormant for more than a decade. In fact, "Might & Magic" would likely still be on the pile of forgotten games, alongside the "No One Lives Forever" and "Jet Grind Radio" of the world, if not for creative director Julien Pirou who badgered Ubisoft for three years for permission to make the game.

Thankfully, Pirou's persistence paid off because "M&MX" is a fantastic game.



Photos courtesy of Ubisoft

"Might & Magic X: Legacy" has pledged to respect the tried-and-tested tradition of its illustrious ancestors as it leads you to epic adventure and quests while exploring the wild peninsula of Agyn.

of old-school game design, and "M&MX" revels in it. There are great awards in the form of valuable treasure and powerful relics hidden around the world, but none of them are just handed to

players. They have to be earned, and like all things earned, the feeling of accomplishment is all the sweeter for it.

Like most RPGs, combat is inevitable. Monsters infest every

corner of the world, popping up even in the most innocuous locations. Combat in "M&MX" is turn-based. Various factors, from class to stat allocation, will determine how many attacks each

Overall grade: **A**

character gets per turn. Each action, including using healing potions, takes a turn. What that means is players will always have to balance using a healing ability against trying to take out an opponent before he kills a nearly dead party member. That makes each fight a unique challenge — none of them are cakewalks.

Most fights will end with party members either close to death or out of mana, and neither regenerate outside of combat. Instead, each party has supplies that act as a campsite that heal health and mana and which can be purchased at town shops in limited quantities. Certain status ailments like poison need to be healed with their own potions though, so camping out isn't a one-stop solution for everything.

What's interesting about this mechanic is that while you can continue to buy these supplies, it's not really possible to just use them after every battle. Everything in the game is limited. Enemies don't respawn after an area is cleared. Treasure chests are limited and randomized. There is, as of yet, no endless dungeon. So the amount of gold and experience points you can use to increase skills and abilities are in limited supply.

This forces players to really think about every decision they make. Do you spend your hard-earned gold on a shiny new sword or a batch of healing potions? That choice — and the consequence of that choice — is what makes the entire game work. The world refuses to just let you win. Instead, it presents players with a vast expanse of explorable territory, full of danger and reward, and dares you to conquer it. If that sounds like your type of game, "Might & Magic X: Legacy" might be the game for you.

Bottom line: If you're the type of gamer who is up for a challenge and doesn't mind a little old-school flavor, you owe it to yourself to give "Might & Magic X: Legacy" a try.

Grade: A

Online: youtube.com/watch?v=Ys6fISg9bZs
darnell.michael@stripes.com



In the role-playing game, users will control the destinies of four adventurers as they become entangled in the political machinations and intrigues unfolding in and around Karthal.

Many more staff-written game reviews at stripes.com/military-life

WEEKEND: BOOKS

'Original American Spies'

How 7 secret agents of the Revolutionary War helped shape history

By **BATHSHEBA MONK**
Special to Stars and Stripes

In the past couple of years, politicians have been talking a lot about our founding fathers and aligning themselves with their immutable purity of purpose and character. Of course, this causes red flags to go up because for one thing no one can know the motives or intents of people two hundred years dead, no matter how many documents they've left behind. Anyone who's been judged on a document or recording taken out of context knows how flabbergasting that is. Intent and purpose are nuanced things. Take away the moral, economic and social landscape and all that's left is a faded two-tone picture. And nothing lies like a photo.



The other thing is this: What we learn in school about the early days of our country is distilled down to a belief in the country's inevitability and an exasperated disbelief that anyone would oppose our destiny. Basic American history books are a bloodless chronicle of good guys, bad guys and boisterous pronouncements. I always want to shake these history books to see if any revolution is hidden in there.

With this background, I found it refreshing to read Paul R. Misencik's new book, "The Original American Spies: Seven Covert Agents of the American Revolutionary War." Misencik uses lavish detail taken from extensive research to highlight the clandestine activities of seven Revolutionary War spies and puts them in the context of their personal lives, and the larger war they operated in. The result is experiencing the Revolutionary War from the ground level and in real time.

It was a long war — 1775-1783 — and Misencik does a fine job of showing just what that meant: you had to choose your allegiance as either a Whig (American sympathizer) or a Tory (British sympathizer). Tory sympathies would get you much-needed business, but it would earn you the wrath



Paul R. Misencik

of the American mob or sabotage by rebel groups such as the Sons of Liberty. You needed passes to travel through occupied territory — and all territory was occupied by either the Americans or British — to get simple supplies like a bag of flour, and you had to live with the constant suspicions and paranoia that no one was who they said they were. Living in 1774, it's hard to imagine not having the freedom to espouse your political beliefs, but that's what it was like in 1775 when the war started.

There weren't a lot of volunteers for spy duty, and Washington had to appeal to patriotism rather than the romance of being a colonial James Bond. And being a spy in the Revolutionary War required specific talents that might seem quaint in the age of drones and cloud computing. For example, the spy had to be physically strong and had to have a good memory as anything written down would be used as evidence against him or her, and, as the non-negotiable punishment for spying was death by hanging, the spy had to possess a large dose of courage.

Misencik tells the story of Lydia Barrington Drarragh, a female spy whose large house in Philadelphia was requisitioned by the British for meetings. She realized soon that, as a woman, she was invisible to the British and she could go in and out of these meetings unnoticed except for requests

for refreshments. Drarragh didn't start out wanting to spy, but she seized her advantage and found ways to send all her intelligence to General Washington. Most noteworthy was the intelligence that British General Howe intended to surprise the Americans at White Marsh and because of Drarragh's stealth and fast action, Howe met a well-prepared army and retreated.

Misencik makes the point repeatedly that spying was not an honorable occupation and after the war many spies chose to keep their wartime spying activity to themselves, even if it meant financial ruin. This was the case for James Rivington, a publisher who loudly ridiculed the American independence movement and its leaders in his newspapers during the war even while extracting military intelligence from British officers and feeding it to the Americans. After the war, he spent time in debtor's prison, rather than expose his secret role supporting the Americans — and thus jeopardize other family members who were on British pensions.

To me, the most interesting theme of "Original American Spies" was that the British had a huge advantage: a well-tired lives. Lydia Barrington Drarragh, for example, had easy access not just because of her gender, but because her second cousin was serving as an aide to General Howe and appearing with her cousin gave her unspoken approval as a trustworthy hostess. Another female spy, Ann Bates — who spied for the British — had a husband who was a low-ranking infantryman in the British army but received passes to pass into General Washington's camp, which were signed by Benedict Arnold. There was a lot of fluidity in family and patriotic alliances that would be hard to untangle even after the war was over. Although I think it might be time has passed so we can forgive the British.

www.bathshebamonk.com

Paul R. Misencik is the author of two books besides "The Original American Spies": "George Washington and the Half-King Chief Tanacharison: An Alliance that Segregated the French and Indian War," and "Washington's Teenage Spy: Sally Townsend of Oyster Bay" due out later this year. Misencik is presently the Chief of the Operational Factors Division of the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board. He is a member of the First Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line, living history foundation. He lives in Reston, Va.



Artis Henderson

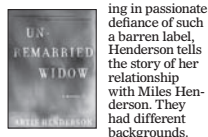
Army widow tells story of love and loss

By **DAVID TARRANT**
The Dallas Morning News

There are stories of war we are used to seeing: the soldier as action hero or the wounded warrior returning home. Then there are the war stories that are not so familiar, of the families left behind.

Artis Henderson's "Unmarried Widow" is one such story, an exquisitely sensitive portrait of a new bride whose marriage is cut short when her husband is killed in the Iraq War.

The book's title refers to the characteristically dry, bureaucratic language used by the military to describe a woman in Henderson's situation. As if writing in passionate defiance of such a barren label, Henderson tells the story of her relationship with Miles Henderson. They had different backgrounds.



Artis grew up poor, the only child of a single mother, whose father died when she was young. Miles was a Texan and the son of an airline pilot.

Artis has recently graduated from an Ivy League university when she meets Miles, an Army pilot in helicopter training, at a nightclub. Almost immediately they come together, sharing a deep, passionate and breathtaking love for each other. It is that love that sustains Henderson when she moves with Miles to Fort Hood, Texas, and then to Fort Bragg, N.C.

Artis describes herself as a fish out of water in the intensely insular life of a military community. Feeling isolated and lonely, she moves back home with her mother when Miles deploys with the Iraq War.

The relationship with her mother is key to her coming to some understanding of her past and the death of her father, and of how she grieves the death of her husband. She writes with unflinching honesty of her grief and in a way that puts herself, at times, in an unflattering light. But that's what makes this memoir so poignant and authentic. The writer hides nothing.

To read more about author Artis Henderson, see the *Spouse Calls* column on Page 41.

Book examines love between Robert Louis Stevenson, wife

By **JOY TIPPING**
The Dallas Morning News

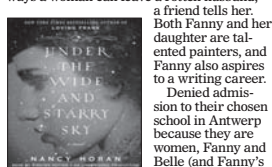
It's hard to believe it's been 6½ years since the publication of Nancy Horan's bestselling debut, "Loving Fanny," a riveting tale centered on Frank Lloyd Wright's lover and muse, Mamah Borthwick Cheney, that remains vividly fresh in my memory.

In her new novel, "Under the Wide and Starry Sky," she once again takes a deep, disconcerting dive into the tumultuous marriage to a significant love interest.

Horan has been credited with inventing this popular subgenre of literary fiction; since "Loving Frank," we've had "The Paris Wife" (Hemingway), the recent "Mrs. Poe" (Edgar Allan Poe) and many others along the same lines. "Loving Fanny," as masterful as she is at blending carefully researched history with the novelist's art.

In the case of "Starry Sky," Horan aims her authorial laser at Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson and his lover and eventual wife, American Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne. As the title suggests, Fanny, a married woman with three young children,

is fleeing her cheating husband to study art in Europe. "It's one of the few respectable ways a woman can leave a rotten husband," a friend tells her.



Both Fanny and her daughter are talented painters, and Fanny also aspires to a writing career. Denied admission to their chosen school in Antwerp because they are women, Fanny and Belle (and Fanny's two sons) move

to Paris and study art while living on bare bones. Then the youngest child, Hervey, dies of scrofulous tuberculosis. Overcome with grief and needing a cheap escape, the family moves to Grez-sur-Loing, a Bohemian riverside colony.

There Fanny meets Robert Louis Stevenson — called Louis or Lou. Wearing a black velvet jacket, an embroidered felt smoking cap, a red sash, white linen pants and high boots, he makes a remarkable entrance. "He walked quickly to the house, pausing

to consider each of the two doors. Rejecting both, he chose the open window. With the grace of a high jumper, he threw one long leg and then the other over the windowsill and hurred himself into the dining room."

His friends call Louis the "Great Exhilarator." Fanny, 10 years older than Lou but young in heart and mind, couldn't help but notice.

The admiration is mutual, but their love builds slowly. Once the sparks rise to flames, Fanny divorces Evil Husband and marries Louis, who begins tinkering with "Treasure Island" when Fanny's son, Sammy, asks him to "tell me a pirate story."

The Stevensons' way was rarely easy. Louis battled with both his writing and his health, barely escaping death from maladies related to weak lungs. Money was always a problem, even after Louis' books began selling. Fanny suffers from bouts of what sound like migraines and bipolar disorder. She envied Louis' literary success, and she resented his friends who, she believed (with some cause), treated her as an outsider.

Horan's prose is gorgeous enough to keep a reader transfixed, even if the story itself weren't so compelling.

WEEKEND: ENTERTAINMENT

NEW ON DVD

"Dallas Buyers Club": The film is an example of how the sum of the parts of a movie can be greater than the whole. Matthew McConaughey and Jared Leto turn in Oscar-nominated performances, but their work gets lost in a script that drifts unchecked between a human drama and a political message. The performances are so good that when the movie shifts to the political battles—shown through the efforts of an idealistic doctor (Jennifer Garner)—it comes across as an infiltrator into the powerful emotional message.

"About Time": Relationships can be perfect if you can travel through time. No director/writer has shown a better understanding of the multifaceted aspects of love than Richard Curtis. He's done it again with "About Time." Even with the fantasy element of time travel tossed into the mix, the film wraps itself around you with a sweetness and affection that resonates with the realities of love—the good and the bad. His production works because it's easy to relate to the events, and they spark memories of our own loves and losses.



COURTESY OF MURRAY CLOSE/MCT

"About Time," starring Rachel McAdams and Domhnall Gleeson, is available on DVD.

"Baggage Claim": A young woman decides to track down men she previously dated in hopes of making a love connection. Paula Patton stars. A harmless romantic comedy that follows a familiar theme: A woman just can't seem to find the right man. She sets out to find that true love while remaining oblivious to how the man of her dreams has always been in her life. If you can't spot this guy, you've never seen a Lifetime or Hallmark movie.

Also new on DVD Tuesday, Feb. 4:

"Free Birds": Two turkeys travel through time to change Thanksgiving.

"Burton and Taylor": A look at Hollywood's most famously volatile on-again-off-again couple.

"Joanie Loves Chachi: The Complete Series": Scott Baio, Erin Moran play teens in love.

"Banshee Chapter": Journalist is drawn into the world of top-secret chemical research.

"Bob the Builder: Let's Build!": Bob and his team never back down from any challenge.

"A Case of You": Shy guy goes to extremes to impress girl of his dreams.

"Scored": Story of a woman overcome with a fury.

"Family Matters: The Complete Fourth Season": Includes 24 episodes of Steve Urkel.

"The Inn of the Sixth Happiness": Englishwoman (Ingrid Bergman) goes to China.

"The Divorce": TV anchorwoman celebrates divorce by throwing herself a party.

"The Lady Vanishes": New adaptation of Alfred Hitchcock's thriller.

"House of Versace": Story of fashion icon Donatella Versace.

"Laverne & Shirley — The Seventh Season": Further escapades of the best friends.

"Justice League: War": Darkseid and his forces invade Earth.

—Rick Bentley/The Fresno Bee

No laughing matter

Will Forte's impressive turn to dramatic roles

By CHRIS KOMPANEK
Special to The Washington Post

Like many "Saturday Night Live" veterans, Will Forte came up through improv group the Groundlings, where his classmates included Maya Rudolph and Kristen Wiig. But his initial gigs were on the writing side—first as a staffer on the short-lived "Jenny McCarthy Show" and then on the "Late Show with David Letterman" and "That '70s Show." And those experiences inform Forte's acting.

"If I were doing somebody else's sketch, in my head I'd be thinking about if they were happy with this. I would be very tentative," Forte recalls. He admits that "SNL" executive producer Lorne Michaels noticed his reservation and almost didn't bring him back to the cast after his second season. "The stuff I

'It's hard enough getting comedy acting jobs ... so I didn't think it was anywhere near the realm of possibility.'

Will Forte
on being offered more dramatic roles

2010, it was on the heels of a "MacGruber" movie spinoff written with "SNL" friends John Solomon and Jorma Taccone and co-starring Rudolph and Wiig. "We made exactly the movie we wanted to make," Forte says. This made the critical and commercial failure of it harder to process despite the slow crawl it's now making towards cult status. "We're going to write a sequel at some point, but I don't know if anyone will let us make it."

Forte, 43, has a disarming humility about him. When asked about his recent turn to dramatic roles, he offered: "It's hard enough getting comedy acting jobs—it's not like I'm the go-to guy for comedy roles—so I didn't think it was anywhere in the realm of possibility."

That realm opened up when Oscar-nominated short-film director Steph Green approached him about appearing in her feature debut, "Run and Jump," which received its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival last year and is available on video on demand. "I don't know why Steph Green thought of me for it, but we have the same agent. It's a small-budget movie, and I guess she just had an inkling that I'd be right for the role. I thought the script was really cool and that the headline was 'Forte!'"

He remembers his flailing friends during the first week of filming to voice mounting regrets and suspicions that he was out of his depth. "I was very self-conscious about how I was doing and hadn't had any of my major scenes yet, but I was so nervous." Once they started to film, the scenes began to get used to the vulnerability.

"Like with 'Nebraska,' it's much closer to who I am in real life," Forte explains of his character, Ted Fielding, a brilliant American doctor who moves in with a family to observe the young husband, who suffers from a rare stroke that has drastically altered his personality.



AMY SUSSMAN, INVISION/AP

Former "Saturday Night Live" cast member Will Forte is pursuing a new chapter in his career with dramatic roles in "Run and Jump" and Oscar-nominated "Nebraska."

Despite his sensitivity, Fielding is quite clueless in identifying his own emotions.

"Everyone seems to be like this," Forte relates. "You're so good at giving advice when somebody goes through a breakup. You have all the answers. But when you go through your own breakup, you can't take any of your own advice. It's so much easier to look from the outside in."

Those who remember Forte parading on screen in "MacGruber" completely naked—a while "holding" a strategically placed stick of celery—might find it hard to believe the actor could be susceptible to shyness.

"You do things in comedy that seem like they would be embarrassing, but it's nowhere near as trying to seem realistically emotional when open in front of a camera," he says. "It's really terrifying."

Once he got over those reservations, he was eager to jump back in when Alexander Payne (one of Forte's favorite directors) was looking for a lead for "Nebraska." "I was always such a fan of his because the stuff I would do in comedy was big and absurd most of the time

and watching his stuff, it all comes from such a grounded place. I always had a real intense respect for that." He wasn't expecting to get the part, but he did.

"Alexander Payne is the master. It was such a great experience. I will never forget it," he gushes while remembering his initial fear about never even having taken an acting class when his co-star was Hollywood icon Bruce Dern. "Here's this legend who's worked with these amazing people: John Wayne, Jack Nicholson, et cetera. I just thought: Is he going to be comparing me with these guys?"

Forte's next project brings him back to writing, but it's the walking the same fine line between comedy and drama. He's developing a series, "The Last Man on Earth," for Fox that imagines a virus that has wiped out the entire world, leaving just one man, who discovers miraculously that a woman's survived, too. "The answer to his prayers, another person. They can restart the population, but the only problem is they hate each other. They don't get along, so they're forced to try to figure that out," Forte says.

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS

Feeling stressed? Keep it to yourself

By JEFF STRICKLER

Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

We can easily pick up second-hand stress from the people around us. We also can pass it on.

Debra Safyre was standing in line at a deli in Minneapolis waiting to order lunch when she was hit by a sudden wave of anxiety.

"There was no reason for me to be triggered that way," she said. "Then I noticed the person in front of me. She was jittering so badly, shaking so badly, that I was responding to her stress — and I didn't even talk to her."

Her experience was not unusual.

Secondhand stress — tension that we pick up from the people and activities around us — is a natural defense mechanism that helped keep our ancestors alive, said Dr. Amit Sood, an expert on stress at the Mayo Clinic. But as soon as we pick up that tension, we risk becoming family members or co-workers — and, yes, even strangers — whom we encounter.

"Stress travels in social networks," he said. "It is highly, highly contagious."

Fortunately for Safyre, founder of Safyre Catalyst, a Richfield, Minn.-based company focusing on personal and group energy management, she quickly realized where her surprise anxiety was coming from and was

able to move away from its source.

"It's kind of like a tuning fork," she said of secondary tension. "When you hit a tuning fork, everything around it starts vibrating with it. It's the same thing with stress. If stress is a very strong vibration around you, you're going to start reacting to it."

The impact that secondhand stress has on us has only recently been appreciated by psychologists, said Dr. Berendina Numan, co-founder of the Center for Counseling and Stress Management, with offices in Minneapolis and Minnetonka, Minn.

"It's been only the last 10 years" that the topic has been explored in much depth, she said. "There hasn't been enough research to know all the answers about secondhand stress."

Doctors do know that stress in small doses is essentially a good thing, Sood said. It's part of the body's warning system that creates the fight-or-flight response and generates a surge of energy that helps us deal with a crisis. But excessive or prolonged stress can lead to health issues ranging from headaches to heart problems.

Anxiety and tension can be picked up, passed on as easily as germs, may impact physical, mental health

Protecting oneself from secondhand stress begins with identifying its causes, said Dana Kadue, owner of Life Flow Coaching in Minneapolis.

"The first step is awareness of the things around me that create stress in my life," Kadue said. "It's all about self-awareness, discovering when the stress shows up."

Start the investigation with who's around at the time, Sood suggested.

"Many of us have partners, supervisors, colleagues or neighbors who are stress-provoking," he said. "How do I recognize these people? These are the people I feel judged by too much. I feel anxious when I'm meeting them. I try to avoid being with them. I find these people unpredictable. They often have high expectations, and I feel like I have to be perfect with them; they are very rigid. And I've often found that many of these people have different moral values than mine."

Once you've identified the problem people, you have three basic courses of action: You can change them. You can get away from them. Or you can learn to protect yourself from them.

The first two have limited applicability.

A person might be open to constructive criticism about their behavior, but it must be presented in a way that doesn't put them on the defensive, Sood said.

Even then, there's no guarantee

they'll be responsive.

Getting away from the irritant is not always a viable option, either, especially for someone whose stress is coming from a boss or co-worker in a job they don't have the financial wherewithal to leave.

Which brings us to the third option: learning how to avoid falling victim.

"Stress resilience is something we can work on," Kadue said. "It's about responding to the stress rather than reacting to it."

Both Kadue and Safyre recommend finding something supportive — it can be a photograph, a memory or an object like a bracelet — that generates pleasant thoughts that allow you to ground yourself during a stress-inducing situation.

"Stay in touch with it so you're not lost in their energy," Safyre said. "If you have a confrontation, tell yourself, 'I'm not going to allow this to happen.'"

The source of the stress is not always a person, Numan said. "Sometimes just walking into a place that is set up similar to one where you had a stressful experience will do it," she said.

"We can be totally oblivious as to what's causing the stress," Safyre said.

"It's all about investigating. Pay attention to how you're responding. And you have to be very observant" about what's happening at the time.

Excessive or prolonged stress can lead to health issues ranging from headaches to heart problems.

MCT illustration



WEEKEND: FAMILY



PHOTOS BY STEVEN SENNE/AP

Child development experts say it's natural for toddlers to be fascinated with their own image, and that interest plays an important developmental role as they develop a sense of self. But some parents who remember the days before iPhones wonder if their children will ever really understand the power of a cherished photograph.

Toddlers love selfies

More tech-savvy tots obsessed with smartphones

By GILLIAN FLACCUS
The Associated Press

Every so often, Brandi Koskie finds dozens of photos of her 3-year-old daughter, Paisley, on her iPhone — but they aren't ones Koskie has taken.

"There'll be 90 pictures, sideways, of the corner of her eye, her eyebrow," said Koskie, who lives in Wichita, Kan. "She's just tapping her way right into my phone."

The hidden photos, all shot by Paisley, illustrate a phenomenon familiar to many parents in today's tech-savvy world: Toddlers love selfies. Observant entrepreneurs have caught on to these image-obsessed tots, marketing special apps that make taking photos super-easy for little fingers. You can even buy a pillow with a smartphone pocket so toddlers can take selfies during a diaper change.

But toddlers aren't the only ones taking photos nonstop. It's not unusual for doting parents to snap thousands of digital photos by the time their child is 2. Today's toddlers think nothing of finding their own biopic stored in a device barely bigger than a deck of cards.

While the barrage of images might keep distant grandparents happy, it's not yet clear how such a steady diet of self-affirming navel-gazing will affect members of the first truly "smartphone generation." Tot-centric snapshots can help build a healthy self-image and boost childhood memories when handled correctly, but shooting too many photos or videos and playing them back

instantly for a demanding toddler could backfire, said Deborah Best, a professor of cognitive developmental psychology at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C.

The instant gratification that smartphones provide today's toddlers is "going to be hard to overcome," she said. "They like things immediately, and they like it short and quick. It's going to have an impact on kids' ability to wait for gratification. I can't see that it won't."

Julie Young on her young sons' fascination with her iPhone

that firsthand. She was recently helping her 3-year-old son record a short birthday video for his cousin on her iPhone when he stopped mid-sentence, lunged for her phone and shouted, "Mom, can I see it?" "It's caught on the end of the video. He couldn't even wait to get the last sentence out," said Young, who has two sons. "The second the phone comes out, they stop, they look, and they attack."

Now Young and her husband make their sons wait to look at a new video or photo until after dinner or until the other parent comes home, when everyone can watch together. They are careful to sit with their kids when looking at photos and have adopted the phrase "prac-

tice patience" as a family mantra.

It's natural for toddlers to be fascinated with their own image (think mirrors), and that interest plays an important developmental role as they develop a sense of self, child development experts say. Watching a video again and again can also help move events from short-to-long-term memory, Best said.

But like any other fun thing kids get obsessed with, too much of it can be bad. Parents should make sure some photos show the child with other family members or friends. Parents can also sit with kids and narrate the photo or video as if it were a bedtime story.

"When we read a book to a child, it's the same thing we do with these photos," Best said.

Koskie has noticed that cuddling in bed on a lazy Saturday morning and swiping through digital photos is one of Paisley's favorite activities, and it seems to encourage her to ask about her place in the world. They look at photos and videos together on the iPad going back to Paisley's birth and "she'll start to ask questions: 'When I was a little tiny baby did I do this? Did I do that?'"

Paisley and the iPad are almost the same age: She was born two weeks after it came out. "That's a base-level, foundation technology for her," said Koskie, who handles marketing and content strategy for the email app EvoMail. "Someday it's all going to come back to bite me or she's going to come back and say, 'Wow, there's this whole encyclopedia of my whole life.' We're very plugged in, for better or for worse."

SPOUSE CALLS

Through loss comes unexpected blessing

A poet once told Artis Henderson she was too young to write a memoir. He should have learned more about her before assessing the depth of her life story. Knowing her memoir's title would have been enough. "Unremarried Widow" isn't bookstore shelves in January.

"I feel like a lot has happened in my life but then as soon as I start talking to other people, I learn that everyone has a story," said the New York-based writer, who is 33. "Unremarried Widow" is her story — an intensely personal one. She said she wanted to tell it for herself and for other military widows as well.

It's a story of loss: Henderson's husband, Miles, an Army helicopter pilot, died in a crash in 2006 while deployed to Iraq. More importantly, the book is a story about their love, even after he is gone.

The title seems little more than an official label, until the pages reveal the description also applies to Henderson's mother. The author's father died in an airplane crash in which Henderson, then 5, was also injured. Her journey through grief after Miles' death gave her insight into the grief of her mother, who never remarried.

Henderson's story is sometimes hard to read but harder to put down. Reliving it by writing must have been harder still, but she said she felt compelled to do it after meeting other women with similar stories.

A year and a half after Miles died, she attended a weekend event for bereaved military families through Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors. At first, she was overwhelmed.

"Everyone was hugging and so glad to see each other, and I thought, 'I don't know anybody,'" Henderson recalled. "Then I fell in with a group of women my age. ... [Now] we meet back every year, and I hug them. I found my community there."

Henderson, already a writer, began to think about telling her story.

"It struck me that moment when we were all sitting at Arlington around the grave of the husband of one of the women," she said.

"We fell into this discussion of autopsies and verifications and briefings, and I thought how incredible and awful that these young women know these things. I felt this obligation that everyone should know what it means to lose a spouse."

It was a personal turning point as well, when Henderson realized there were others who understood.

"The women I met through TAPS were my age, late twenties, early thirties. We share that and everything that comes with a military death."

Henderson said she regrets that it took losing her husband to discover the friendship of other military wives. Early in her relationship with Miles, she mostly avoided connections to his Army life.

"Much of that came from being young, not knowing any better," she said. "The other wives from Miles' unit ... have been so good to me. I wish I had warmed up to them sooner and realized they would be my family forever, even after losing him."

When she first met Miles, she said she was afraid becoming attached to the Army would mean giving up the life she had imagined for herself.

"Miles used to say all the time that it was an adventure," she said. "I always got so wrapped up in thinking I had to have everything figured out, my career and friends and how my life would work."

If she could speak to her younger self, she said, "I would just tell her to relax and be patient and just enjoy it."

Miles wrote a letter to his wife, which was returned with his personal effects after his death in Iraq. He wrote that if anything happened to him, she should continue to pursue her dreams as a writer, and she has. Her work has appeared in The New York Times, Reader's Digest, and she writes a regular column for Florida Weekly.

"I feel odd saying this," she said, "but in a way I feel like I've been blessed. I'm getting to do what I always wanted. I feel that Miles had a hand in that."

Terri Barnes writes Spouse Calls weekly for Stars and Stripes. Contact her at spousecalls@stripes.com or at stripes.com/go/spousecalls.



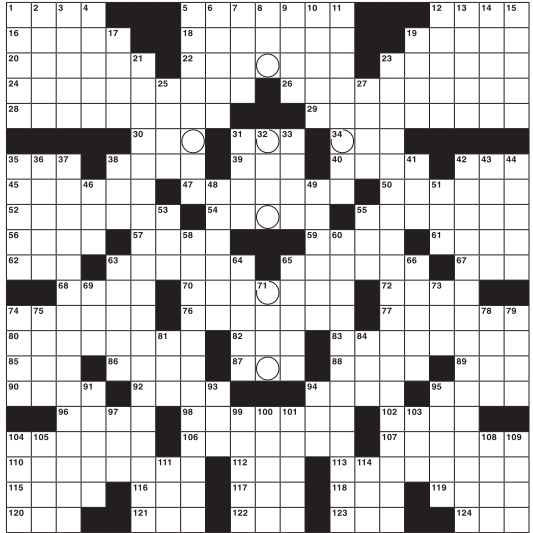
Terri Barnes

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

TOIL AND TROUBLE By DICK SHLAKMAN AND JEFF CHEN / Edited by Will Shortz

- ACROSS**
- 1 Turns left
- 5 Ogles offensively
- 12 One for the money?
- 16 Actors Ken and Lena
- 18 Gettable
- 19 ___ Foods
- 20 Cash in
- 22 Tiny tunneler
- 23 Big gun
- 24 Ones doing aerobics
- 26 Popular British band named after the villain in "Barbarella"
- 28 Sinister señor
- 29 Lacoste offering
- 30 Soul maker
- 31 Channel showing old Hollywood hits
- 34 Disposables maker
- 35 Modus operandi
- 38 Kind of accounting
- 39 Bistro glassful
- 40 Sturdy ones
- 42 Org. using X-rays
- 45 Equally, say
- 49 Tangled
- 50 Legit
- 52 Words before and after "my lads" in the United States Merchant Marine anthem
- 54 ___ acid
- 55 Sides are often alongside them
- 56 Entry fee?
- 57 "Don't look now ..."
- 59 Bell or shell precursor
- 61 Regarding
- 62 Super Bowl successes, for short
- 63 Key of Bach's most famous Mass
- 65 Furniture style of Louis XV
- 67 Dupe
- 68 the Explorer
- 70 "That's all folks," for Mel Blanc
- 72 Batman : Robin :: Green Hornet : ___
- 74 Strand, somehow
- 76 Girl's name meaning "happiness"
- 77 Squirm
- 80 John Cusack's co-star in "Say Anything ..."
- 82 Dir. of the Missouri between S.D. and Neb.
- 83 Like leftovers, often
- 85 Born
- 86 Actor Richard who played Jaws in Bond films
- 87 Some A.L. (but not N.L.) players
- 88 It may be indicated with a ring
- 89 More than pique
- 90 Too smooth
- 92 Dudley Do-Right's love
- 94 Double place?
- 95 Part of N.R.A.: Abbr.
- 96 Email button
- 98 Ernie or tern
- 102 Baloney, in Bristol
- 104 Entitle to wear vestments
- 106 Headstrong
- 107 East Asian stew
- 110 "Ta-ta!"
- 112 It may be radical
- 113 Places where polar bears fish
- 115 They may be sprayed on
- 116 HBO competitor
- 117 Bill's partner
- 118 Pro
- 119 Major, for example
- 120 Poetic rhapsody
- 121 Soak (up)
- 122 Summer White House setting: Abbr.
- 123 "Lady" of the sea
- 124 Rocky shout-outs
- DOWN**
- 1 Biblical peak
- 2 Actress Vega of "Spy Kids"
- 3 Expand
- 4 Mortimer of old radio
- 5 Contributors to The Paris Review, e.g.
- 6 First of 12 in South America
- 7 Muffs
- 8 Band with the 1994 album "Monster"
- 9 "He" and "she" follower
- 10 Not perform as expected
- 11 Dance popularized by Michael Jackson
- 12 "Yep"
- 13 Iraqi P.M., ___ al-Maliki
- 14 Like one of the arm bones
- 15 Destined (for)
- 17 Like vino de Rioja
- 19 Gobs
- 21 Compassion, figuratively
- 23 Start of many jokes
- 25 Dos x tres
- 27 Latin "others"
- 31 Blue-green
- 32 Part of many an anniversary celebration
- 33 Tax-free bond, for short
- 35 Pair of cymbals in a drum kit
- 36 Ceaselessly
- 37 Tautological statement of finality
- 38 Cavs, on a scoreboard
- 41 Elbow-bender
- 42 Superstitious thespian's name for a work of Shakespeare ... from which 21-, 23-, 37-, 58- and 60-Down all come
- 43 Take care of
- 44 Cause of an insurance investigation
- 46 One of 17 on a Monopoly board: Abbr.
- 48 What a goner has
- 49 Army threats?
- 51 Mendoza Mrs.
- 53 "___ get it!"
- 55 System prefix



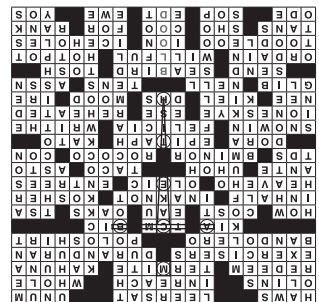
- 58 A single stroke
- 60 What the lucky person leads
- 63 Lively
- 64 Piqued
- 65 500 events
- 66 Equipped to row
- 69 Have debts
- 71 "The Addams Family" nickname
- 73 ___ Maria
- 74 Rat
- 75 Carol
- 78 Towel designation
- 79 Elysium
- 81 Cry before "haw"
- 84 Big stretch?
- 91 Moccasin decorations
- 93 You might bow your head to receive one
- 94 Play about Capote
- 95 Famous Titanic victim
- 97 Zilch
- 99 One of "The Homecomings"
- 100 Drippings
- 101 Alternatively
- 103 "Lo-o-vely!"
- 104 Director
- 105 You may find a fork in it
- 108 Prefix with -phile
- 109 Some reproaches
- 111 Palindromic cry
- 114 Intimidate

GUNSTON STREET



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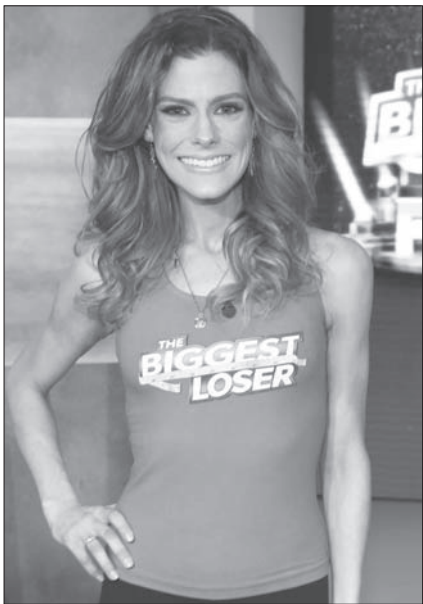


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FACES



PHOTOS BY TRAE PATTON, NBC/AP

Rachel Frederickson appears on the Feb. 4 finale of "The Biggest Loser" in Los Angeles. Frederickson lost nearly 60 percent of her body weight to win the latest season and pocket \$250,000. A day after her grand unveiling on NBC, she faced a firestorm of criticism on social media from people who said she went too far.

How much is too much?

Shocking transformation of 'Biggest Loser' champion challenges notion that the show touts healthy habits

BY STEVE KARNOWSKI AND JEFF BAENEN
The Associated Press

A day after Rachel Frederickson won the latest season of "The Biggest Loser," after shedding nearly 60 percent of her body weight, attention wasn't focused on her \$250,000 win — but rather the criticism surrounding her loss.

Experts cautioned that regardless of her current weight, the criticism being levied on social media about her losing too much isn't helpful. A more constructive message is needed, they say, centering on body image and healthy living.

The 5-foot-4, 24-year-old Frederickson dropped from 260 pounds to 105 under the show's rigorous exercise and diet regimen — but also time spent on her own before the finale. She was a three-time prep state champion swimmer in Minnesota, and said she turned to sweets for solace after a failed romance and gained the weight over several years.

Frederickson's newly thin frame lit up Twitter on Wednesday, with many viewers pointing to the surprised expressions on the faces of trainers Jillian Michaels and Bob Harper during the show's Tuesday night finale. Many tweeted that Frederickson looked anorexic and unhealthy, while others congratulated her for dropping 155 pounds.

Frederickson's body mass index, a measure of height and weight, is below the normal range, said Jillian Lampert, senior director of the Emily Program, an eating disorder treatment program based in St. Paul, Minn. But she said the criticism directed against Frederickson isn't helpful.

"As a society we often criticize people for being at higher weights — that's part of why we have the TV show 'The Biggest Loser' — and then we feel free to criticize lower weight," Lampert said.



Frederickson trains during the first episode.

A more constructive message to send young people would center on well-rounded health and the importance of eating well, moving well and sleeping well, she said.

"We certainly see a lot of people who struggle with eating disorders who use the same behaviors on that show to an extreme," she said. "That can't be helpful."

During an appearance on "Access Hollywood," Frederickson didn't directly respond to the criticism but said she intends to live a healthy lifestyle going forward.

"My journey was about finding that confident girl again. Little by little, challenge by challenge, that athlete came out. And it sparked inside me this feeling that I can do anything I can conceive. And I found that girl, and I'm just going to embrace her fully," she said.

In a statement released late Wednesday, NBC said it was committed to helping all of the show's past contestants live healthier lives.

Ed Sullivan Beatles item heads to auction

The Associated Press

A large piece of stage backdrop autographed by the Beatles during their first live U.S. concert 50 years ago is headed to auction, where it could draw \$800,000 to \$1 million.

Face caricatures accompany the signatures that the Fab Four penned between sets of their historic Ed Sullivan appearance on Feb. 9, 1964, which they opened with "All My Loving" in front of 700 screaming fans in the audience and 73 million television viewers.

The current owner of the 4-foot-by-2-foot plastic wall section is Andy Geller, a longtime Beatles collector and television and film voice-over artist. It is being sold in New York City on April 26 through the Dallas-based auction house Heritage Auctions.

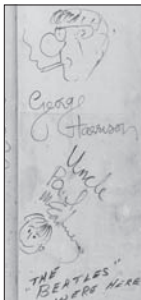
A stagehand is responsible for getting the band members to sign the back of the wall section known as a hardwall traveler, which is rolled back and forth to reveal the next act. It's believed to be the largest Beatles autograph.

"It was a spur-of-the-moment thing," 81-year-old Jerry Gort said in a telephone interview from his Calabasas, Calif., home. "They came down from stage right from their dressing rooms, I gave them a marker and asked them to sign the wall."

The band signed vertically from the bottom up: John Lennon first, then Paul McCartney, who scribbled "Uncle Paul McCartney," followed by George Harrison. Ringo Starr, shorter than the rest, couldn't reach the top so "I put my arms around him and lifted him," said Gort, simultaneously putting his foot on the wall

to keep it from opening until Ringo finished signing the piece.

Gort said Ringo then "made a mad dash to get to his drums" and the band launched into "I Saw Her Standing There" and "I Want to Hold Your Hand."



A section of a backdrop wall (shown in part) signed by the Beatles is going up for auction.

without knowing its history.

Heritage's music memorabilia consignment director Garry Schrum called the wall "an amazing wild card," which he said could go for \$800,000 to \$1 million.

The wall also contains the signature of other acts that followed later in the television season, notably from the Searchers, another British band, which signed "The Searchers Were Here with Kilroy 4/5/64."

At the end of the season, the wall was destined for the trash heap — but was saved by another carpenter for a young disabled Beatles fan.

Geller said he purchased the wall privately for more than \$100,000 in 2002

Dylan Farrow's brother defends Woody Allen

Woody Allen's adopted son has defended him against accusations he molested his then-7-year-old adopted daughter in 1992.

Moses Farrow told People magazine in an interview published Wednesday that Allen "of course" did not molest Moses' younger sister, Dylan Farrow.

Moses Farrow and Dylan Farrow were adopted by Allen and actress Mia Farrow. Dylan Farrow recently wrote an open letter to The New York Times saying she was abused.

New York Times public editor Margaret Sullivan, who had been critical of the Times' handling of Dylan Farrow's accusation, wrote in an online post Wednesday that Allen has requested the opportunity to submit a response to her letter. A spokeswoman for the Times confirmed that Allen's request was granted.

'Octomom' faces additional welfare fraud charge

"Octomom" Nadya Suleman was charged with a fourth count of welfare fraud Wednesday after prosecutors said they discovered she wrongly collected an additional \$10,000 in benefits from the state.

When the single mother of 14 children was charged last month with three counts of fraud, authorities said she didn't disclose about \$30,000 in earnings from videos and personal appearances when she applied for welfare last year.



EVAN AGOSTINI, INVISION/AP

Material advocate

Pop icon Madonna (pictured) didn't perform, but she spoke with passion about human rights issues, at Amnesty International's "Bringing Human Rights Home" Feb. 5 in New York City.

"The right to be free, to speak our minds, to have an opinion, to love who we want to love, to be who we are — do we have to fight for that?" Madonna said, answering herself with an expletive. "I've always considered myself a freedom fighter since the early '80s when I realized I had a voice and I could sing more than songs about being a material girl or feeling like a virgin."

The concert included performances from the Flaming Lips, Imagine Dragons, Lauryn Hill, Blondie, Debbie Harry, Cake, the Fray, Bob Geldof, Tegan and Sara, Colbie Caillat and Cold War Kids.

— The Associated Press

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Ernie Gates

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OPINION

TSA chose giggles over finding guns

By MARTIN SCHRAM
 McClatchy-Tribune News Service

This was the week when America's airline passengers got our sweet revenge. It happened right before our eyes.

We saw a federal bureaucratic body known as the Transportation Security Administration get summarily shoved through a high-tech machine (in this case, just a word processing computer). Then one of its own former body image screeners did to his ex-bosses what he and his colleagues had done to us for several years: He stripped that bureaucratic body starkers! Suddenly, its bare-naked "T-S-A" was just dangling out there, no longer covered up by years of phony promises and flawed practices. This past week, the TSA's inadequacy was exposed for all the world to see.

It was not a pretty sight, and certainly not a comforting one.

On Jan. 31, former TSA security screener Jason Edward Harrington wrote a magazine article for Washington's agenda-setting online news organization Politico.com that exposed as blithering failures — and privacy invaders — those original TSA full-body scanning machines. And a number of the TSA folks who ran those machines that, since 2007, had been stripping airline passengers down to their anatomically accurate nude, X-ray-like images. Harrington, who worked at Chicago's O'Hare Airport from 2007 until last year, unsubtly titled his Politico.com article "Dear America, I Saw You Naked — And yes, we were laughing. Confession: I'm a TSA agent."

But the article's most damning revelation was not the bare-naked titillation that filled most of our old media's coverage of Harrington's confessions. Nor the TSA

gang's frat-house shenanigans, as they'd gather in the Image Operator's Room to gawk and crudely joke about our images on the screens. "Piercings of every kind were visible," he wrote.

No, the article's most unforgivable revelation was that the TSA put us through all of that even though it knew its Advanced Imaging Technology machines could reveal everything about a person's body — except, maybe, his or her concealed weapon.

"We knew the full-body scanners didn't work before they were even installed," Harrington wrote. Indeed, when his training class instructor was asked for his off-the-record opinion of the machines, the trainer said: "They're (naughty word deleted)." Harrington wrote: "He said we wouldn't be able to distinguish plastic explosives from body fat and that guns were practically invisible if they were turned sideways in a pocket."

Actually, the TSA knew a lot more. In 2010, I wrote two columns about an alternative technology that would invade no one's privacy — except maybe the privacy of someone sneaking a weapon through security. I called it automatic Target Recognition (ATR), software for detecting contraband items on a person. And it wasn't just theoretical — it was being used every day in Amsterdam's Schiphol International Airport.

It was much like the TSA's machines — with one crucial difference: Instead of producing an anatomically accurate X-ray image of a passenger, the ATR only shows a chalk-like outline of a generic human body (like the ones cops draw on sidewalks at crime scenes). If the machine detected a concealed weapon or suspicious item, a

yellow box appeared over that spot on the white-outlined body. Then the passenger was escorted to a non-public tap-down.

But in 2010, the TSA was dismissive of this technology solution to the privacy invasion — even when several U.S. senators urged it after seeing it operate in Amsterdam. Finally, they enacted a law requiring all imaging be done by the ATR chalk-outline software. After spending more than \$80 million, TSA installed new machines with ATR software at all airports.

Today, the TSA's machines show the chalk-like generic body — instead of your real one. And yes, the imaging features the telltale yellow box alert.

Now we get it. When those government officials kept promising you "transparency," they were only talking about your clothing. Not their promises and practices.

After Harrington's article had stripped the TSA bare — revealed it to be just another example of wasteful spending and disregard to the rights of ordinary citizens — the TSA's Dickensian-named administrator, John Pistole, went on NBC's "Nightly News." But he didn't deny the article's disclosures. His message was that his TSA's past is no longer a fitting prologue. Grown-up kids who once played cops and robbers may remember how, after they were "shot" dead, they would simply jump up and say "I'm a new man!" and continue playing the game. So too with this game.

"There is a new TSA in town doing things 180 degrees differently than what he alleges was done," Pistole said. He added: "We're going to take a more professional conduct of officers, if proven."

Martin Schram, an op-ed columnist for McClatchy-Tribune, is a veteran Washington journalist, author and TV documentary executive.

Marrying your equal can boost inequality

By PETER ORSZAG
 Bloomberg News

Rich and poor Americans are slowly but surely staking out separate lives. Increasingly, they have been moving to different communities, and more frequently they are also marrying people of similar income and educational backgrounds. This is a phenomenon social scientists call assortative mating.

In 2005, 58 percent of wives with a high school diploma were married to men with the same amount of education, too. In 2005, 43 percent of wives with college degrees were married to men who also had college degrees. In 1960, the share was 33 percent.

What are the effects of this increased marital sorting? For one thing, it contributes to income inequality. If marriages occurred randomly across educational categories, Greenwood and his co-authors show, the Gini coefficient for household income in the U.S. in 2005 would decline to

0.34 from 0.43. (The coefficient falls as inequality decreases.) That would more than offset the entire increase in inequality that has occurred since the late 1960s. (This comparison is not entirely fair because even in the late 1960s, some assortative mating occurred. Nonetheless, it shows how large the effect is.)

Marital sorting also affects women's participation in the workforce. Since the 1970s, the correlation between the wages of husband and wife has doubled, Christian Bredemeier and Falko Juessen of the University of Dortmund found. Over the same period, wives of high-income men have increased their working hours more than wives of low-income husbands have.

In the 1970s, wives with high-earning husbands tended to work fewer hours than other wives did. Assortative mating changed the pattern.

Finally, marital sorting may be having some effect on geographical mobility. Cross-state mobility rates have been falling in the United States, research by Raven Molloy and Christopher Smith of the Federal Reserve and Abigail Wozniak of the University of Notre Dame has found.

In my role on the boards of nonprofits, I have seen many job offers declined because a move would be required, and the person's spouse would have to leave behind a promising career. Because finding two good jobs in a new city is much harder

than finding just one, it is possible that this "co-location problem" for dual-earning couples with increasingly similar incomes and educational backgrounds is discouraging mobility.

Well-educated couples tend to live in large cities because it increases the chance that both spouses can find an adequate job, research by Costa Costa of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Matthew Kahn of the University of California, Los Angeles suggests. Another piece of evidence comes from the cross-state mobility rates themselves. Since the 1980s, they have fallen almost by half among dual-earning couples, while the rate for single (or no) earners has fallen by only a third. Yet Molloy finds some evidence that these differential trends have had only a modest effect on total mobility rates (after other factors are taken into account).

In any case, assortative mating indicates why trying to bridge the increasing divides between rich and poor in the U.S. is so complicated and difficult. If income inequality is being driven in part by changes in marriage patterns, what can anyone do about that?

Peter Orszag is vice chairman of corporate and investment banking and chairman of the financial strategy and solutions group at Citigroup and a former director of the Office of Management and Budget in the Obama administration.

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OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

US can do more to stop Assad

The Washington Post

President Barack Obama has adopted the position that any U.S. intervention in Syria would be ineffective, "short of us being willing to undertake an effort in size and scope similar to what we did in Iraq." His aides regularly accuse those who critique U.S. policy — which currently consists of donations of humanitarian aid and a feeble attempt to promote peace negotiations — of favoring another Middle East war.

In reality, the U.S. has a number of options for action in Syria that would be more robust than the current policy but fall well short of the use of U.S. ground forces. They might not bring the Syrian civil war to a quick end, but they could address several major challenges, including the horrific war crimes being committed by the regime of Bashar Assad, the dire humanitarian crisis affecting several parts of the country and the growing power of Islamic extremist forces.

The first and simplest step would be for the Obama administration to back a resolution being developed by Britain and other allies in the U.N. Security Council. It would call for greater humanitarian aid deliveries to areas now cut off because of military sieges and authorize U.N. agencies to work in areas not under government control. More than 200,000 people in the Damascus suburbs and the city of Homs are being deliberately starved of food and medicine for the past several months, which is a war crime. The Security Council, in particular, regime defenders such as Russia — should be forced to cast a vote for or against ending this abomination.

Whether the resolution is approved or not, the Obama administration could take action to end the blockades and other crimes, such as the regime's ongoing practice of dropping "barrel bombs" from helicopters on civilian housing, hospitals and schools. These weapons are filled with nails, pieces of metal and other junk intended to inflict maximum damage on civilians. The administration could tell the Assad regime and Russia that if the atrocities do not stop, Obama will order missile strikes against facilities that carry out and support them, such as helicopter bases. Given the regime's reaction when Obama threatened such action last summer, it might relent; if not, the administration's blockade could be significantly degraded.

Obama has disparaged the al-Qaida threat in Syria, calling it a "JV team." U.S. intelligence agencies apparently disagree. Last week the director of national intelligence, James Clapper, told Congress that Syrian al-Qaida forces inspired by the Assad regime are the U.S. mainland and compared the areas under the terrorists' control to Pakistan's tribal territories.

Obama could address this threat by returning to a plan he embraced and then dropped last year: accelerating the arming and training of moderate opposition forces. The administration's emphasis on the failing Geneva peace talks has obscured the reality that fighting on the ground is likely to determine Syria's near-term future as well as any eventual settlement.

Right time to support Ukraine

(Memphis, Tenn.) Commercial Appeal

Russian President Vladimir Putin must be understandably tense about now. The Winter Olympics, on which he has staked his government's prestige and \$51 billion



These workers at Volkswagen's only U.S. factory — in Chattanooga, Tenn. — will decide this month whether to be represented by the United Auto Workers union.

of its money, are about to begin in a locale notable for its proximity to an area infested by terrorists who have vowed to disrupt the games.

Longer term, his plans to haul Ukraine back into the Russian orbit show signs of unraveling. Last fall, Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was on the verge of signing a political and economic deal with the European Union, one that had considerable popular support. At the last second, he reneged after Russia threatened economic reprisals if Yanukovich signed. Yanukovich caved, and his countrymen took to the streets in the thousands. A heavy-handed attempt at a crackdown only riled the protesters, further causing them to up their demands. Putin's Kremlin postponed indefinitely the next installment of a \$15 billion aid package, slowed Ukraine's exports to Russia, its largest trading partner, to a crawl and threatened to cut off its natural gas supplies. ...

The European Union, with U.S. help, must make good on its promise of aid and commit to make up for any trade sanctions the Russians impose. The West has a rare opportunity to be of genuine help to a country that has been treated badly by history and even worse by the Kremlin.

Legal homophobia can't stand

Los Angeles Times

A disturbing new law in Nigeria establishes sweeping restrictions on homosexuality and has already led to dozens of arrests.

Even before the law went into effect, it was illegal to engage in same-sex relations. But the new law goes further, prohibiting civil unions and same-sex marriages and threatening to slap a 10-year prison sentence on anyone who officiates at such a marriage. The law bans public displays of affection between people of the same sex, outlaws gay support organizations and makes it illegal for gay groups to meet. In a country with the world's third-largest number of people living with HIV or AIDS, the law could put serious obstacles in the way of health groups doing outreach to gay populations and possibly even outlaw programs providing education on HIV prevention.

As U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said, rarely has there been legislation "that in so few paragraphs directly violates so many basic, universal human rights."

Africa is notoriously homophobic; 38 countries on the continent ban same-sex relations. Many of those bans are based on colonial-era sodomy laws, while others derive their authority from Islamic law or other religious and socially conservative ideologies. The initial version of Uganda's infamous anti-gay bill — which was not

ultimately enacted — would have authorized the death penalty for some repeat offenders.

But Africa is not alone. Less draconian but still unjustifiable is the Russian ban on giving "propaganda" (otherwise known as information) about gay relationships to minors. ...

Such laws violate human rights. But it is worth noting that state sodomy laws were still enforceable in the U.S. as recently as 2003, when the Supreme Court issued its landmark decision in Lawrence v. Texas. And only in the last decade has U.S. public opinion shifted from disapproving of gay marriage to supporting it. Ironically — and shamefully — some conservative evangelicals who lost ground with their anti-gay gospel here have exported it to African countries, including Uganda.

No one has the moral high ground. Every country must work harder to create tolerant societies that respect the rights of all.

Drink in society's changes

Aniston (Ala.) Star

Social media was aflame with conservatives red-hot over a Super Bowl ad by Coca-Cola. A rendition of "America the Beautiful" sung in multiple languages and featuring a culturally diverse group of Americans inspired anger and threats of a boycott from the right.

A couple of reactions. ■ Coca-Cola is in the business of selling soft drinks to consumers across the globe. It doesn't take its marketing lightly, carefully honing ads to appeal to the widest audience possible. If a Coke ad leaves a viewer unhappy, there's a good chance he or she is on the wrong side of history.

■ This overheated response sheds light on why Republicans have had difficulty creating an immigration policy. Demographics and changing public attitudes lead in one direction while a hard-core conservative wing of the nation that mostly votes with the Republican Party refuses to budge.

Health experts tell us increased consumption of sugary drinks is a leading contributor to the U.S. obesity crisis. We note with some irony that a boycott — as ill-considered and unproductive as it might be — could make the nation healthier.

Obamacare shown to cost jobs

Boston Herald

When it comes to Obamacare, the bad news train keeps rolling.

A stunning report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office this week more than tripled the number of American who, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, will likely be out of the workforce by 2024, from the equivalent of 800,000 full-time workers to 2.5 million.

"CBO estimates that the ACA will reduce

the total number of hours worked, on net, by about 1.5 to 2 percent during the period from 2017 to 2024, almost entirely because workers will choose to supply less labor — given the new taxes and other incentives they will face and the financial benefits some will receive," the report notes.

Since taxpayer subsidies to purchase insurance will shrink and premiums rise with workers' incomes, there will be a disincentive for some individuals to work more, the report notes. Expanded eligibility for Medicaid is a similar disincentive. Meanwhile the financial penalty paid by larger employers who don't provide adequate coverage to workers is likely to chill working hours, too. ...

And what price the dysfunctional Obamacare website? CBO projects 2 million fewer Americans will enroll in health insurance plans via the exchanges or the Medicaid program this year than projected, thanks to the site's "significant technical problems."

Of course the ostriches who occupy the White House continue living in a state of denial. They are touting the CBO's projections as a good thing, arguing the 2.5 million are really just exercising a personal choice to, say, "spend more time with their families."

"This is all about choices created by the availability of quality, affordable health insurance," White House spokesman Jay Carney said. Unemployment as just another appealing choice. Well, that's a new one for Democrats.

Give US workers good footing

New News

On Feb. 12-14, Volkswagen workers in Chattanooga, Tenn., will vote in an election that could drastically change the future of U.S. labor-management relations. VW workers will be deciding whether to join the United Auto Workers and establish their country's first works council.

With growing concern about health care, workplace safety and temporary, low-wage jobs, there is no doubt that the American work force wants to see a change in 2014. The question is whether we will address our challenges collaboratively.

U.S. unions and companies have a history of working against each other, but co-operation has long been the German way. In Germany, work councils are a unique model of collaboration between workers and employers that simply doesn't exist in the U.S. yet. Works councils and the German system of co-determination demonstrate how company management and a strong union can partner and thrive.

Volkswagen values the collaboration it has with its workers, their unions and works councils, and credits those relationships with much of its success. Unlike many employers in the U.S., who fight fiercely against workers' organizations, Volkswagen has taken the courageous position of letting workers in Chattanooga decide for themselves. ...

Unions have long been a ladder to the middle class and the UAW and the domestic automakers have helped fuel the American middle class. Through collective bargaining agreements that created tens of thousands of jobs in communities across the country. For example, when the plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., closed as part of GM's bankruptcy, the UAW stepped in to negotiate the reopening of the plant. The agreement resulted in a \$350 million investment in the state.

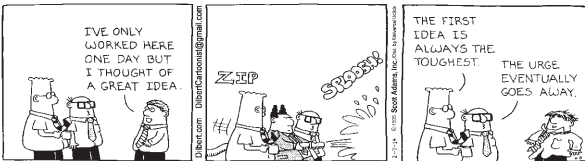
Unfortunately, some politicians and special interest groups choose to ignore the success a union has already brought to Tennessee and other states. Their attack campaign is a direct attack on the right to organize. The result is to have a works council and to choose representation belongs to the workers. ...

If we place value in our society on democracy and fairness in the workplace, we must value those employers that allow workers to choose representation in a free and fair environment, and condemn politicians that step in the way.

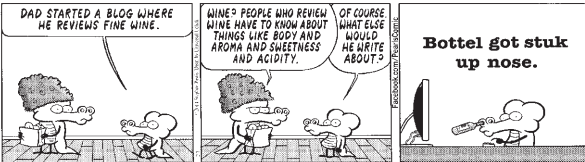
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Dilbert



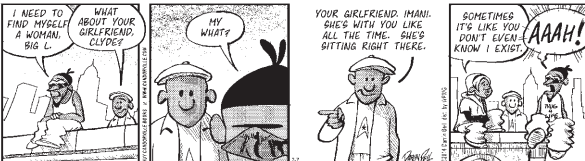
Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



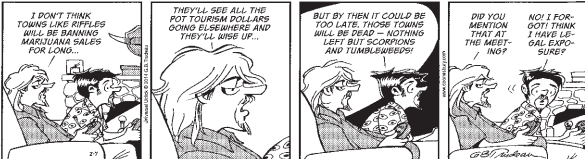
Candorville



Get Fuzzy



Doonesbury



Fort Knox



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Moment
- 4 Basketball's Lamar
- 8 Imperfection
- 12 Savings plan acronym
- 13 Stare stupidly
- 14 Apiece
- 15 Agent of change
- 17 Tragic
- 18 Dogfight participants
- 19 Lisa of "The Cosby Show"
- 20 Helen's abductor
- 22 Gloomy
- 24 "Zounds!"
- 25 Garrison lodgings
- 29 Year-end abbr.
- 30 Mephistopheles
- 31 Actress Ortiz
- 32 Constantinople, now
- 34 Teeny bit
- 35 Verse
- 36 Lessen
- 37 Violinist's stroke
- 40 Oil cartel
- 41 Punch
- 42 Lists
- 46 Indulge in vogueing
- 47 Spinning sound
- 48 Cattle call
- 49 Eyelid woe
- 50 Diplomacy
- 51 Engage in pugilism

DOWN

- 1 (Uncorrected)
- 2 Geological period
- 3 Eye problem
- 4 Looks lasciviously
- 5 "— of Our Lives"
- 6 Chances, for short
- 7 Encountered
- 8 Soft felt hat
- 9 Reclined
- 10 Farm fraction
- 11 Shapen
- 16 Base neutralizer
- 19 Singe
- 20 Mani counterpart
- 21 Mellows
- 22 Piece of information
- 23 Exam format
- 25 Infant cemetery
- 26 Subterranean
- 27 Entanglement
- 28 Unaltered
- 30 Frosty's makeup
- 33 High point
- 34 First victim
- 36 In two places at once?
- 37 Snail mail org.
- 38 Basis of a whodunit
- 39 Active
- 40 Ear-related
- 42 100 lbs.
- 43 "Eureka!"
- 44 Slickum
- 45 Red or White square

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-7

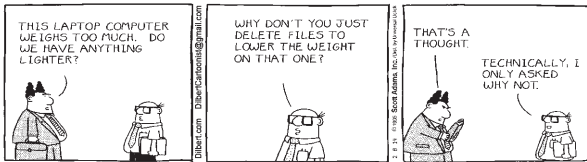
CRYPTOQUIP

OVKC KSNHL K RHC DGN ZJVL
GJ PJJUU LN SJ LGJ FNAL
ALBQEL: "LGJ QFONBLKPEJ
NZ SJOPR ALJBPJAL."
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE I'M USING MY LEGS TO PLAY A PRACTICAL JOKE, YOU MIGHT SAY THAT'S JUST AN ARMLESS PRANK.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: L equals T

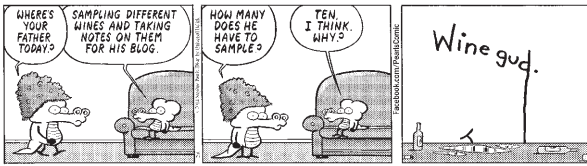
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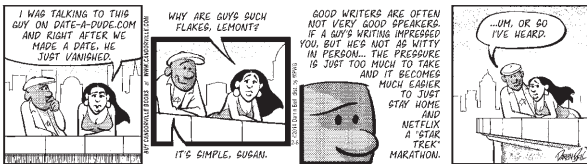
Pearls Before Swine



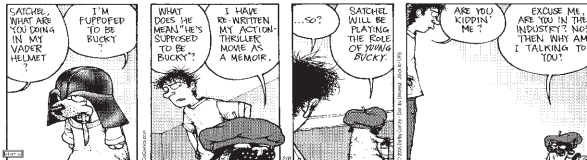
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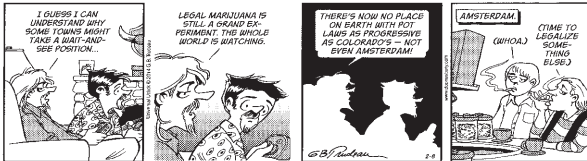
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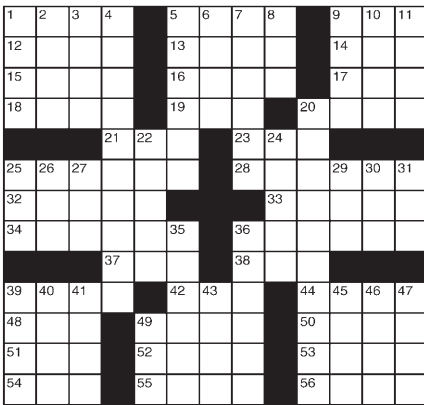
Doonesbury



Fort Knox



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Cicatrix
- 5 "The Laughing Cavalier" artist Frans
- 9 Lingerie buy
- 12 Not pizzicato
- 13 Sandwich treat
- 14 Tear
- 15 Amateur night prop
- 16 Wee
- 17 — and outs
- 18 Saber's cousin
- 19 Took off
- 20 Teased
- 21 Greek consonant
- 23 Acapulco gold
- 25 Made
- 28 Caught
- 32 Show hunger
- 33 Blog's ancestor
- 34 Colored ring
- 36 South Carolina river
- 37 Deteriorate
- 38 Branch
- 39 Shrek, e.g.
- 42 Hem partner
- 44 Colorful fish
- 48 Compete
- 49 Big name in jeans
- 50 Uncontrolled revelry

DOWN

- 1 Wise one
- 2 Harvester's gathering
- 3 Teen woe
- 4 007 portrayer
- 5 Dragster's car
- 6 Met melody
- 7 Fab Four surname
- 8 Sauce source
- 9 Vivacity
- 10 Orange coat
- 11 Church section
- 20 "The French Connection" author
- 22 Greeting
- 24 Echolocation apparatus
- 25 Rx overseer
- 26 Bobby of hockey
- 27 Fish eggs
- 29 Cudgel
- 30 Preceding
- 31 Easter egg preparation
- 35 Goddess of wisdom
- 36 Lumberjack's task
- 39 Finished
- 40 Donate
- 41 Oboe insert
- 43 Shakespeare's river
- 45 Incite
- 46 Enthusiastic
- 47 Stevenson villain
- 49 Part of UNLV

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-8

CRYPTOQUIP

BWBHWHU FZRRZUZZ FWTR
TEZCZ ZIZCMWRZ'U GPIWCJFZ
GWWS JFZQ JU TEJBBZS

BWFPFWZU: QPUE-IJOOZ.
Yesterday's Cryptquip: PLAY ABOUT A GUY WHO FELT HE NEEDED TO BE THE MOST STRICT: "THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING STERNEST."

Today's Cryptquip Clue: Z equals E

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL



Rashaan Evans chooses Alabama as his commitment to play NCAA college football during national signing day on Wednesday in Auburn, Ala. Evans spurned hometown Auburn to side with the Tide.

Alabama rules signing day

Southern Cal makes impressive haul in Sarkisian's first class

By RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

On signing day, Alabama is still No. 1. A season without a national championship on the field didn't slow down coach Nick Saban on the recruiting trail. The five-star prospects flocked to Tuscaloosa, including one who went to high school at Auburn.

National signing day had coaches up at the crack of dawn and fax machines beeping on college campuses around the country — though more and more recruits email their national letter of intent these days.

Hats were donned, a few commitments were flipped and mostly the rich got richer: National champion Florida State, Ohio State, Stanford, Oklahoma and Notre Dame were among the programs that received high marks.

And as usual, most of the Southeastern Conference got glittering grades from the experts. None better than Alabama. The Crimson Tide sat atop the rankings for Rivals, Scout, 24/7Sports and ESPN.

Alabama signed six of 33 players given five-star ratings by Rivals, including Rashaan Evans, a linebacker from Auburn High School who didn't decide to roll with the Tide until Wednesday, passing on joining his hometown Tigers.

No other school had more than three five-stars.

"He kind of lapped the field," Tom Lemming of CBS Sports Network said about Saban.

This marks the third straight year and fifth time in the last six years Alabama has Rivals' top-ranked class.

Ultimately, the strength of the class will be determined in a few years. Good luck topping the 2009 Alabama class with AJ

McCarron, Trent Richardson, Eddie Lacy, D.J. Fluker and Der Kirkpatrick.

But when it comes to signing day grades, is Alabama's latest class Saban's best yet? "Yes," said Mike Farrell, national recruiting analyst for Rivals.com. "They're competing against themselves, oftentimes. "This is the highest point total we have ever had at Rivals. They broke the record last year and this year, they broke it again."

Other news and notes from signing day:

Sark attack

Southern California's first signing day with Steve Sarkisian as coach could not have gone much better. Three of the highest-rated players that entered the day ended picked the Trojans, starting with 360-pound offensive lineman Damien Mama from Bellflower, Calif.

Next up was Adoree' Jackson from Gardena, Calif. The five-star cornerback put his own spin on the pick-a-hat announcement ceremony by digging through a shopping bag for his choice. He pulled out a sports drink, a sneaker, some other stuff, before slapping on a USC hat. The theatrics felt a bit fat, but no doubt Trojans coaches and fans were entertained in the end.

"Growing up as a little kid, my favorite player was Reggie Bush," Jackson said.

Jackson was also considering UCLA, LSU and Florida.

"Adoree' was the big surprise," Farrell said. "We had no idea what that kid was going to do."

Finally, it was John Smith, better known as Juju, from Long Beach, Calif., picking USC over Oregon, Notre Dame and UCLA.

"Fight on, dude," Smith said.

The strong finish had USC ranked 10th

in the nation by Rivals and Scout.

Momma drama

Malik McDowell wants to go to Michigan State. The five-star defensive end said so Wednesday morning during a news conference at Southfield (Mich.) High School.

His father, who has said publicly he would rather have his son leave Michigan and go to Ohio State or Florida State, is now on board with that decision.

McDowell's mother, Joya Crowe, wasn't at the announcement. She has said she has a bad experience at Michigan State and wants her son to go elsewhere. Michigan was also in the mix for McDowell. Crowe's signature is not required on the letter of intent.

"Dad's willing to sign but they want mom on board," Farrell said.

Michigan State's official list of signees released Wednesday afternoon did not have McDowell's name on it.

Odd's and ends

New Penn State coach James Franklin ended up signing a top-25 class that included five players who had been committed to Vanderbilt when Franklin was there. ... Franklin's departure crushed Vanderbilt's class, though new Commodores coach Derek Mason did manage to lure one stud recruit, defensive end Nfane Oselewa from Sacramento, Calif., away from his old school, Stanford. ... Charlie Strong's first recruiting class was not quite up to the usual Texas top-10 standards. More like top-20. Strong's ties to SEC country, which the Longhorns hope will extend their reach in the near future, did help land defensive tackle Poona Ford from Hilton Head, S.C. Meanwhile, Texas A&M's class drew consensus top-10 grades.

Top recruiting classes

Alabama

National rankings: Rivals 1; Scout 1.
Best in class: Da'Shaun Hand of Woodbridge, Va., could bring a pass rushing prowess that Saban has been seeking. The 6-foot-4, 260-pounder collected 56 sacks during his four-year high school career.
Best of the rest: LB Rashaan Evans, OL Cam Robinson, ATH Bo Scarbrough, OL Dominick Jackson and CBs Tony Brown and Marlon Humphrey are also five-star prospects, according to at least one service.

Note: For the second straight year, Alabama raided rival Auburn's backyard for a high-profile linebacker. Evans joined Reuben Foster in leaving Auburn High School for Tuscaloosa. "As far as Rashaan committed to us, Reuben Foster called me and absolutely said that he was a much better recruiter than I was and he was really responsible for that," Saban said.

One that got away: There weren't many important targets the Tide whiffed on. They made a late run to Miami commitment (and signed) Chad Thomas, a five-star defensive end.

LSU

National rankings: Rivals 3; Scout 5.
Best in class: Leonard Fournette, RB, New Orleans.

Best of the rest: Malachi Dupre, WR, River Ridge, La.

One that got away: Cameron Robinson, OL, West Monroe, La. (Alabama).

Note: Head coach Les Miles on Leonard Fournette: "The inhibitor for a running back to be successful and doesn't have great speed or he has speed and not quite big enough. So, you have to be able to run the speed or build him up. Leonard Fournette has both size and speed."

Ohio State

National rankings: Rivals 3; Scout 5.
Best in class: Kaelwon McKinlan, LB, Hinesville (Ga.) Liberty County.

Best of the rest: Dante Booker, LB, Akron (Ohio) St. Vincent St. Mary; Johnnie Dixon, WR, West Palm Beach (Fla.); Dwyer; Janardo Jones, OL, Chicago De La Salle.

One that got away: Marcus Latta, OL, Montclair (N.J.).

Note: The signing day was filled with an emphasis on linebacker, a position where we're going through an overhaul. There are four linebackers who were recruited and they have to play four or five. Just so everybody knows, there's no redshirting (for them)," head coach Urban Meyer said.

Florida State

National rankings: Rivals 4; Scout 3.
Best in class: Calvin Cook, RB, Miami Central HS.

Best of the rest: Ermon Lane, WR, Homestead (Fla.); HS; Travis Rudolph, WR, Cardinal Newman (Fla.) HS.

One that got away: Ja'Von Harrison, WR, Kathleen (Fla.) HS. He had been committed to Virginia Tech.

Note: Head coach Jimbo Fisher said, "I think Ja'Von (Harrison) is right there with the same caliber of them. And then when you get three of those, you spread the field, inside guys, outside guys, they're all big-bodied guys."

Tennessee

National rankings: Rivals 5; Scout 4.
Best in class: RB Josh Malone is rated as the nation's top running back by Rivals.

Best of the rest: RB Jalen Hurst, LB Dillon Bates, S Tony Stewart, TE Daniel Hays, TE Daniel Hays, DE Derek Barnett, RB Derrell Scott, DB D'Andre Payne, DE Rashawn Gaudin and DT Michael Sawyers are all rated among the nation's top 250 prospects by Rivals.

Note: Adoree' Sawyers, who lives in Nashville, Tenn., withdrew his verbal commitment to Vanderbilt after he was hired away from the Commodores coach James Franklin. Sawyers visited Tennessee on Wednesday and signed with the Tigers on Wednesday.

One that got away: De Cory Thomas made a signing day switch to Mississippi State after verbally committing to Tennessee.

Texas A&M

National rankings: Rivals 6; Scout 7.
Best in class: RB Jalen Hurst, LB Dillon Bates, S Tony Stewart, TE Daniel Hays, TE Daniel Hays, DE Derek Barnett, RB Derrell Scott, DB D'Andre Payne, DE Rashawn Gaudin and DT Michael Sawyers are all rated among the nation's top 250 prospects by Rivals.

Note: One member of Texas A&M's recruiting class, RB Jalen Hurst, is amassing so many stats that he's already a down of football for the Aggies. Dallas Skyline cornerback Cedric Collins committed to the Aggies before his junior year in 2012, but was discovered at the end of that season that he had a rare congenital heart condition and couldn't continue his football career. The Aggies chose to give him a scholarship and he signed with Texas A&M coach Kevin Sumlin said the decision was about "honoring commitments."

Florida

National rankings: Rivals 7; Scout 9.
Best in class: Jalen Hurst, LB, Washington, D.C. Already enrolled in school, Hurst is a significant addition since starting CB Lachez Purify and Marlon McCalister.

Best of the rest: David Sharpe, OL, Jacksonville, Fla.; RB Jalen Hurst, LB Dillon Bates, S Tony Stewart, TE Daniel Hays, DE Derek Barnett, RB Derrell Scott, DB D'Andre Payne, DE Rashawn Gaudin and DT Michael Sawyers are all rated among the nation's top 250 prospects by Rivals.

One that got away: Adoree' Jackson, ATH, Gardena, Calif., decided track star, Jackson probably would have given Florida a top-five class. But he chose USC over Florida, LSU and UCLA.

Note: Muschamp finds it amusing to see other staffs celebrate signing day. "They film these staff counts and the staff cheer when they get the (guy)," he said. "Most of the time, you know, you know the guy and you know he's not going to be there. If you haven't talked to them in 48 hours, you're not getting them."

GOLF

Hard-to-find Furyk set to return at Pebble

By DOUG FERGUSON
The Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Except for a cameo appearance in California, Jim Furyk has been hard to find on a golf course over the last four months.

That wasn't an accident. And it wasn't an injury.

Furyk has been talking the last few years about trying to cut back on his schedule, and he might have finally figured it out. His last meaningful competition was at East Lake in the Tour Championship on Sept. 22.

He decided not to play the HSBC Champions in Shanghai. He opted out of the McGladrey Classic when something came up with his family. He dusted off his clubs to play the World Challenge the first week in December, and that's been it.

"I'm not going all Steve Stricker on you yet," Furyk said Wednesday, a nod to his close friend who started playing a limited schedule last year.

Stricker and Furyk are the only PGA Tour members from the top 50 in the world who have yet to play a single PGA Tour event in the new wraparound season that began in October. That's right. Both are tied for dead last in the FedEx Cup standings.

"We're the only guys who haven't made a cut. Is that what you're saying?" he said with a smile.

Furyk returns to golf this week in the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Stricker's debut is still a few weeks out at the Match Play Championship.

Furyk hasn't won since he captured the FedEx Cup in 2010 by winning the Tour Championship, though his game has not been far off the last two years. He was tied for the lead with three holes remaining in the U.S. Open in 2012, when he snap-hooked a 3-wood off a forward tee at Olympic Club and made bogey. A year ago, he had a one-shot lead over Jason Dufner going into the final round of the PGA Championship and lost to Dufner's closing 68.

There was nothing left for him after the Tour Championship. He was left off the Presidents Cup team, was not interested in being an assistant captain, and instead spent the rest of the year at home in Florida. He didn't even make it to a Pittsburgh Steelers game.

"It was nice to just get some time off and be home," he said. "I'm trying to figure



ERIC RISBERG/AP

New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick hits from the sixth fairway of the Pebble Beach Golf Links during a practice round for the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am golf tournament on Wednesday in Pebble Beach, Calif.

out the right number of events to where I want my game to be sharp. I want to feel like when I'm in the majors season that I'm click and my game is sharp. And in the fall, I want to be with my family. I want to make breakfast for the kids and take them to school and be involved."

His daughter is 11 and now in middle school. His son just turned 10.

But there was more that bothered him last year. Furyk said he felt grouchy — "He'll attest to that," he said, turning to caddie Mike "Fluff Cowan — and lost patience. He wasn't having as much as he once did. That much can be expected for a guy who just finished his 20th year on the PGA Tour. His career has been so remark-

ably consistent that along with 16 wins, a major and 15 consecutive national teams, only three times has he been outside the top 30 on the money list when healthy.

"I think everyone after 20 years on tour goes through a time where it's not that I don't want to play golf. I just didn't want to be grouchy," he said. "I wanted to have more fun. And I needed to manage my time when I was playing golf and when I was at home, and choose my schedule better."

He talked to his father, the only coach he ever had. And he talked to Cowan, even asking his caddie to draw up a schedule.

"The schedule he wrote out might be the one we play," Furyk said.

Furyk said that will include a full month

off between the U.S. Open and the British Open, a first for him. He plans to take the family to the mountains in Utah. That means missing the AT&T National at Congressional, a course he loves. But these are the hard decisions he finally learned to make.

"That's going to hurt missing Congressional," he said. "I've never missed a tournament that I loved. I've missed some that I like, but not one that I loved."

It starts Thursday at the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, a tournament slow to develop. The 156-player field includes 156 amateurs over three days at Pebble Beach, Spyglass Hill and the Shore Course at Monterey Peninsula Country Club.

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HIGH SCHOOL: DODDS PACIFIC

Kinnick wrestlers begin postseason run

By DAVE ORNAUER
Stars and Stripes

The regular season is but a memory for Kinnick's wrestling team. Now, the postseason fun begins with Saturday's Kanto Plain Association of Secondary Schools finals.

"That's what we're all geared up for," Red Devils coach Gary Wilson said of tournament time. The Kanto finals are first on the docket, the final tune-up for the six Kanto wrestling schools before the Far East tournament next week at Yokota.

It figures to be a two-team race, Wilson believes: his Red Devils against a host St. Mary's Titans team that, while not as powerful as the one that scored back-to-back Far East Division I team title sweeps in 2011-12, can still be a major threat.

St. Mary's is "solid at a lot of weight classes and good at the others," Wilson said of a team featur-

ing reigning Far East champions Ryan Vasconcellos and Jeffrey Koo. "They're a formidable foe. With the varsity vs. varsity format, it's going to be tough."

Postseason activity is not limited to the Kanto mats. Seoul American's boys and Daegu's girls are entered as top seeds in the Korean-American Interscholastic Activities Conference Blue Division Basketball Tournaments at Taejon Christian International School.

It's the last tuneup for all of the Korea basketball teams before the Far East tournaments, scheduled for Feb. 17-19 in Division II and Feb. 17-20 in D-I.

Though tournaments begin this weekend, some regular-season games remain in Japan and Okinawa on the hardwood.

Kadena visits Kubasaki in boys and girls basketball, with the Panthers' girls and Dragons' boys looking to seal their regular-



HANNAH MAY GREER HICKS/Special to Stars and Stripes

Kinnick heavyweight Alaka'i Warford gains the advantage on Zama's Jacob Martin during a DODDS Japan individual tournament at Camp Zama, Japan in January. Warford beat Martin.

season series at 3-1 and their opposite numbers seeking 2-2 splits. Kadena has not lost the girls four-game season series in 10 years.

The last DODDS Japan long-haul basketball bus trips take

place over the weekend when Kinnick travels to M.C. Perry.

Play in the Independent Interscholastic Athletic Association of Guam continues over the weekend and into Tuesday, when

the league begins its annual two-week Far East tournament break. Guam visits St. John's on Friday and entertains Simon Sanchez on Saturday.

ornauer.dave@stripes.com

Schedule

South Korea

Basketball, Blue Division

Postseason
Friday, Feb. 7-Saturday, Feb. 8
KAIAC Tournaments at TCIS

Wrestling

Saturday, Feb. 8

Daegu, Humphreys and Osan at Seoul American

Guam

Boys basketball

Friday, Feb. 7

Okkodo at FDMs, Guam at St. John's, St. Paul at GW, ND at SSHS, Southern at HCA

Saturday, Feb. 8

ND at JFK, FDMs at St. Paul, SSHS at Guam, HCA at GW, Okkodo at Southern

Tuesday, Feb. 11

St. John's at SSHS, St. Paul at HCA, JFK at Okkodo, ND at GW, Guam at Southern

Softball

Saturday, Feb. 8

Guam at Southern, JFK at GW, SSHS (home) at Okkodo

Wednesday, Feb. 12

Okkodo at Guam, Southern vs. AOLG at GW, JFK vs. SSHS at Okkodo

Tennis

Tuesday, Feb. 11

AOLG at Okkodo, SSHS vs. HCA at Tivan, St. Paul vs. FDMs at Tamuning, GW vs. St. Thomas at Ninete, JFK vs.

St. John's at site TBD.

Thursday, Feb. 13

AOLG vs. GW at Tivan, HCA at JFK, FDMs vs. Guam at Ninete, St. Paul vs. St. John's at TBD, St. Thomas at SSHS

Japan

Boys basketball

Friday, Feb. 7

CAJ at ASUJ

Friday, Feb. 7-Saturday, Feb. 8
Kinnick at M.C. Perry

Tuesday, Feb. 11
ASUJ at Kinnick, CAJ at St. Mary's, Yokota at Zama

Thursday, Feb. 13

Yokota at ASUJ

Girls basketball

Friday, Feb. 7-Saturday, Feb. 8

Kinnick at M.C. Perry
Tuesday, Feb. 11
Seisen at Yokota, Zama at CAJ, Kin-

nick at ISSH

Thursday, Feb. 13

CAJ at Seisen, Yokota at ASUJ, ISSH at Zama

Wrestling

Postseason

Saturday, Feb. 8

Kanto Plain finals at St. Mary's

Thursday, Feb. 13-Saturday,

Feb. 15

Far East Tournament at Yokota

Okinawa

Boys basketball

Friday, Feb. 7

Kadena at Kubasaki, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 11

OCSI at Kadena, 6 p.m.

Girls basketball

Friday, Feb. 7

Kadena at Kubasaki, 5 p.m.

Game of the week

Basketball: Kadena at Kubasaki

When — Girls at 6 p.m., boys at 8 a.m. Friday, Feb. 7.

Where — Kubasaki High School, Camp Foster, Okinawa.

What — Fourth and final regular-season meeting between the most decorated programs in Far East Division I Tournament history. Kadena's girls have won the season series every year since 2004 and currently hold a 2-1 lead in the series; however, the Dragons have won four of their last five games. Kubasaki's boys are in the same situation, leading the season series 2-1. The Dragons boys have won five of their last six games.

Players to watch — Kadena's girls

get much of their production from Jasmine Rhodes, off many an assist from freshman point guard Linda Vaughan. Two seniors named Johnson fuel the Dragons' girls attack, center Alyah and guard Sydney. A pair of Harris are Kadena's boys answer to that tandem, guard Jamario and center Preston. Ka-reem Key is playing arguably the best ball for the Dragons' boys; he's had 51 points and 30 rebounds in the last two games.

Also — Kubasaki's boys have won a Pacific-record 11 Far East D-I titles and the girls nine. Kadena's boys own nine titles and the girls six.

Other key matchups

Basketball

KAIAC Blue Division tournaments
at Taejon Christian International

Seoul American's boys and Daegu's girls are the top seeds Friday and Saturday, and Osan and Humphreys are also entered in the last action for all teams before the Far East tournaments Feb. 17-20.

Wrestling

KPASS finals

at St. Mary's International School

The six Kanto Plain wrestling schools in their final tune-up for the Far East meet. The event features three returning Far East tournament champs: Ryan Vasconcellos and Jeffrey Koo of St. Mary's and Eric Overton of Christian Academy Japan.

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HIGH SCHOOLS: DODDS EUROPE



JASON DUH/Stars and Stripes

Vicenza's Marshall Perfetti, who pinned Aviano's Daniel Dingies in a 160-pound wrestling match at Aviano Air Base in December, is part of a strong Cougar contingent who will compete in one of three sectional tournaments Saturday.

Wrestling

Sectional qualifiers set to determine contenders

BY GREGORY BROOME
Stars and Stripes

A week before they all converge in Germany to crown European champions, DODDS Europe wrestlers will disperse to three sites around the continent to determine the contenders.

Saturday's sectional qualifiers at Brussels, Kaiserslautern and Vicenza will establish the bulk of the field for the two-day European championship meet, scheduled for Feb. 14 and 15 at Wiesbaden.

The qualifying works like this. At each sectional, the top three finishers in each weight class will automatically advance to Europeans.

In weight classes with three or fewer participants, only the champion will receive that automatic berth. With three qualifiers apiece from three sectional meets, Saturday's sectionals will fill nine of the 12 slots available in each weight-class European championship bracket.

A panel led by DODDS-Europe athletic director Karen Seadore will convene early next week to determine wild-card entries and complete the field.

While the roster of teams participating in each meet is mostly based on geography, DODDS Europe took a step toward balancing out the odds by splitting its six Division I schools evenly among the three sites.

Here's a look at each field:

Vicenza

German Division I schools

Patch and Vilseck will make the trip south to crash the Italian party, joining American Overseas School of Rome, Aviano, Naples, Signonella and the host Cougars in the seven-team field.

The Panthers finally lost their long-held grip on the Division I championship last year, but seem well-equipped to snatch it back.

After spending the season competing in its familiar German and northern European circle, Patch head coach Norm Matzke said his team is excited to "go to Italy and see the teams that we would normally not see until Europeans."

Patch and Vilseck will leave their respective campuses around 5 a.m. Friday morning, meet up near Munich to board a shared bus for the duration of the trip and wake up early the next morning to compete. But neither team's coach is overly concerned with the itinerary.

"The kids will have ample time to rest and sleep," Vilseck coach Evan Watson said. "I don't see this as a factor."

Matzke was similarly undisturbed by the schedule, which by DODDS Europe standards is not particularly arduous.

"Our travel plans should not affect us very much," Matzke said. "It is just a longer bus ride."

Kaiserslautern

While the Panthers and Falcons both make the long trip over the Alps, Kaiserslautern will gather what advantage it can from staying home to open the postseason.

Division I Wiesbaden and rising Division II power Baumholder represent the Raiders' most formidable opposition; Ansbach, Black Forest Academy, Hohenfels, Incirlik and Rota round out the eight-team field.

"Travelling does take a little out of you and sleeping on the gym floor isn't the greatest," Kaiserslautern coach Brian Daly said. "But we all have to do it throughout the season, so by now most teams should be used to it."

Baumholder, meanwhile, has flirted with Division I team upsets all season.

With three qualifying slots available per class, the Bucs are in a good position to qualify the majority of their roster for a run at a Division II team championship in Wiesbaden.

Brussels

With a central location that is convenient for visitors from Germany, the United Kingdom and the Benelux, the small Brigands are no stranger to sharing the mats with large-school opponents.

In fact, Brussels has seen a Division I school in each of its five meets this regular season and faced multiple Division I schools on two of those occasions, including a home-gym Jan. 25 meet featuring visiting Wiesbaden and Lakenheath along with Division II schools SHAPE and Alconbury.

While the stakes are higher, this weekend's meet will feature a similar collection of talent.

The field includes Lakenheath,

Game of the week

Basketball Lakenheath at SHAPE Friday and Saturday

Many interdivisional games can get ugly quickly in the favor of the larger school. This weekend's clash the Division I Lancers and Division II Spartans might prove an exception to that rule.

While the Lakenheath boys enter the weekend hovering around .500, their schedule includes several games against non-DODDS opponents they won't encounter in the postseason and a number of close losses that suggest a team just a few possessions away from putting it all together. And in fact, the Lancers did put it all together for a signature win on Dec. 14, beating Division I rival Ramstein 42-31 to split a doubleheader with the Royals.

The Lancer girls initially followed a similar path, including splitting two December games against Ramstein. But the team has righted itself after three straight losses to start the 2014 por-

tion of its schedule and will bring a five-game winning streak into Belgium this weekend.

The SHAPE boys will bring a perfect 6-0 DODDS-Europe mark into the games, including an impressive 53-39 win over Brussels on Saturday.

The Spartan girls are a more middling 3-3, but have won two of their last three games and nearly upended powerful Division II reigning champion Brussels in a 34-31 loss Saturday.

The Lancer-Spartan matchup also contains some compelling individual matchups in the backcourt.

For the boys, versatile Lakenheath point guard AJ Ransom will cross paths with SHAPE sharpshooter Conner Manning. In the girls games, Lancer star Kristen Reed and Spartan counterpoint Gina Rhett will collide in an All-Europe duel at the point.

Another key matchup

Basketball Vicenza at Aviano Friday and Saturday

The regular-season battle for Italy has been all but settled, with Vicenza running away from the boys pack and Naples doing the same among the girls. But this weekend represents one of the final chances for those left behind to do something about it.

The Vicenza boys bring an unblemished 8-0 DODDS Europe record into their final games of the regular season. Those wins include conquests over all of the Cougars' familiar opponents, including Division II rival Naples. All, that is, except Aviano.

The Saints have struggled at times over the course of a 7-3 season, but

outed Naples 65-45 on Jan. 25 to even the season series with the Wildcats and start off an active three-game winning streak. Duplicating that feat against the cruising Cougars would attract even more attention to the upstart Division II hopeful.

While Aviano is chasing Vicenza up the boys standings, the two schools share a plight in the girls ranks.

The 3-3 Cougars and 6-2 Saints are both positioned squarely behind unbeaten Naples. Both have had their ill-fated shots at the frontrunning Wildcats, so they'll have to take their frustrations out on each other this weekend.

Schedule

Basketball		
Friday	Rota at Alconbury	Hohenfels at Vilseck
	Lakenheath at SHAPE	Vicenza at Aviano
Saturday	Kaiserslautern at Bitburg	Florence at Signonella
	Wiesbaden at Baumholder	AOSR at Naples
Ansbach at Patch		
Vicenza at Aviano		
Florence at Signonella		
AOSR at Naples		
Wrestling		
Saturday		
Sectional qualifiers		
Ansbach, Baumholder, Black Forest Academy, Hohenfels, Incirlik, Rota, Wiesbaden at Kaiserslautern		
AFNORTH, Alconbury, Bitburg, Lakenheath, Ramstein, SHAPE at Brussels		
American Overseas School of Rome, Aviano, Naples, Patch, Signonella, Vilseck at Vicenza		

the United Kingdom school that is the only Division I program outside of Germany and a domineering weekly presence at northern meets, and the smaller-school regional rivals it routinely overwhelms at those meets, namely AFNORTH, Alconbury and SHAPE.

Bitburg and Ramstein were brought in from Germany to fill

out the seven-team field.

Defending Division I champion Ramstein will make the trip to Belgium hoping to qualify enough of its wrestlers for a shot at retaining its team title despite losing some of the depth that fueled its win over Patch.

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OLYMPICS

Suited for success

US hoping high-tech outfits give them medal edge

By **RAF CASERT**
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — Forget about the sharpest blades and think “tightest suit” instead. For nations like the Netherlands and the United States, those skintight suits could provide the edge to top the Olympic speedskating medals table.

No wonder the sartorial arms race heats up before every Olympics.

“It is a psychological game,” said Bert van der Tuuk, who designed the top suits for the Dutch and Russian teams.

But he says there is science involved too — every four years, there are improvements over the suits than from previous Olympic titles. How much though, remains up for heated debate.

“The difference between winning and losing is partly determined by clothing,” the Dutch skater turned suit designer said in an interview with The Associated Press.

In a sport where margins of victory are sometimes measured in hundredths of seconds, a little less drag, a bit of fabric that keeps a skater in the perfect position, might be just enough to make the difference between a golden glow and obscurity.

For Ireen Wust, the Dutch double gold medalist from Turin 2006 and the Vancouver Games four years ago, the feeling that

“The difference between winning and losing is partly determined by clothing.”

Bert van der Tuuk

Former Dutch speedskater who designed suits for Russia and Netherlands

she is well taken care of, gives her the peace of mind to disregard the whole issue.

“I don’t spend energy on subjects like that, because I cannot change it and it won’t bother me,” she said after a training session in the orange-and-blue Dutch suit.

No nation matches the Netherlands’ relentless commitment to speedskating and the country often has the medal tally to prove it.

But when the Olympics roll around, it is the United States that often puts up the toughest battle. That applies to their suits too — with some hyperbole thrown in.

“THE FASTEST SPEED-SKATING SUIT IN THE WORLD,” was how the Under Armour company described the Mach 39 American suit, developed together with the U.S. aerospace and defense company Lockheed Martin.

It has the U.S. skaters convinced.

“It’s definitely helpful thinking that you have the fastest skin. It’s a confidence booster,” said Brian Hansen, who will compete in the 500, 1,000 and 1,500 meters.

He said the skinsuit has special rivets, seams, bumps and even a diagonal zipper to improve speed. He acknowledges though that it is so tight on some skaters it feels like it restricts their breathing.

Van der Tuuk is not impressed. “They claim to have the fastest suit, but they haven’t tested our suit yet,” he said. Van der Tuuk said he tried some of the elements used in the U.S. suit but rejected them as adding no value.

No American was complaining about their suit in the run-up to Saturday’s opening race, the men’s 5,000. And Jilleanne Rookard was convinced the U.S. team has the edge.

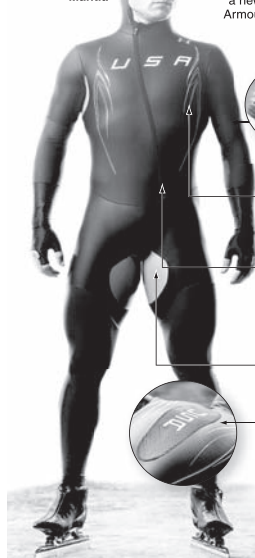
“I did notice that the Dutch had a similar technology,” she said. “We still have a couple advantages that they don’t.” What are those? “I’m not really allowed to talk about anything super specific,” she said.

Wust, in her third Olympics with a third, improved, suit to go with it, is counting on her own sheer power and speed.

“Even if they really have a very fast suit, I still want to beat them,” she said.



Olympian
Joey
Mantia



SOURCE: Under Armour

New suit for US speedskaters

U.S. speedskaters will be sporting a new suit developed by Under Armour and Lockheed Martin at the Winter Games in Sochi, Russia.

Polyurethane molding — dimpled on forearms and head, ribbed on lower legs — helps with air flow.

Racing stripe design inspired by hot rods; suits are black, not the traditional U.S. blue.

Stretchy zipper goes across body and is positioned away from throat, which helps it stay zipped and makes it more comfortable.

Slippery fabric on thighs and underarms reduces friction.

Wicking fabric throughout the suit, vent on back help keep skaters from getting too hot.

GRAPHIC: Chicago Tribune

MCT

Putin eager to prove Russia stepped up its Games

By **ANGELA CHARLTON**
The Associated Press

SOCHI, Russia — They’re designed to celebrate a millennium of Russian might and this country’s modern rebound, and kick off two weeks of extraordinary human endeavors and planetary sportsmanship. But the ceremony opening the Sochi Olympics on Friday, more than anything, will be about one man: Vladimir Putin.

He charmed and strong-armed his way to hosting the Games at a summer beach resort that he envisioned as a winter paradise. He stared down terrorist threats and worldwide wrath at a scarcely veiled campaign against gays. He has shrugged off critiques that construction of the most costly games in Olympic history was both shoddy and corrupt.

Ballet, man-made snow and avant-garde art will make an appearance at Sochi’s Opening Ceremony, though as with all past Opening Ceremonies, the details were under wraps. No matter. All Putin needs is an event that takes the world “Russia is back.”

It’s a message meant for millions around the world who will watch the show — and one for his countrymen, too.

Russians will form the bulk of the spectators in Sochi for the Olympics, a people whose forebears endured centuries of oppression, a revolution that changed the world, a Soviet experiment that built rockets and nuclear missiles but struggled to



ANDREI ISAKOVIC, POOL/AP

President Thomas Bach, left, shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday, the eve of the Opening Ceremony of the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

feed its people. Russians who sometimes embrace Putin’s heavy hand because they fear uncertainty more than they crave freedom, and who, despite inhabiting the largest country in the world, feel insecure about their place in it.

They’re pinning especially high hopes on their athletes, once a force to be reckoned with and the pride of the nation. They were an national embarrassment at the Vancouver Games in 2010, with just three

gold medals and a string of doping busts.

This year, Russia has cleaned up its game and is presenting hundreds of skaters, skiers and other champions in the arenas on Sochi’s seashore and in the nearby Caucasus Mountains slopes of Krasnaya Polyana.

While the United States, Norway and Germany are seen as leading medal contenders, Russia will be pushing hard to bring home a bundle for the home crowd. Putin put on the pressure even as he tried to motivate them this week: “We are all counting on you.”

The world will be watching the entire Olympic machine in Sochi, and using what it sees to sit in judgment of Putin’s Russia, where he has suffocated political opposition and ruled overtly or covertly for 15 years.

Is it a has-been superpower that can’t keep the electricity on during a hockey game? Or a driver of the 21st century global economy? A diplomatic middleweight with ties to despots that wields influence only via its veto at the United Nations? Or a fairy tale of prosperous resurrection from the communist collapse and its brutal aftermath?

The Opening Ceremony will gloss over the ugly bits as they hand over the Games to the men and women who will spend the next two weeks challenging records and the limits of human ability.

Some 6,000 athletes and team members, a record for the Winter Olympics, will come for 98 events, including the new

slopestyle extreme skiing competition that begins Thursday. More women will compete than ever before.

The last thing anyone wants to think about as Sochi opens the Olympics is terrorism, but it won’t be far from anyone’s mind.

A few hundred miles away lies Chechnya, the site of two wars in the past two decades. And Dagestan, childhood home to the two brothers suspected in the Boston Marathon bombings and where militants regularly mount attacks. And Volgograd, where two suicide bombs killed 34 people in December.

A decade ago, extremists hid a bomb in a stadium in Chechnya during construction. At its grand opening, the bomb exploded, killing the Kremlin-backed Chechen president.

Fear of an attack on the Sochi Games has fueled Putin’s strict security agenda and brought U.S. warships to the region. About Russian 40,000 security forces are on guard, standing watch in all corners of Sochi and its Olympic Park on the sea and built-from-scratch mountain ski resort.

Legions of small business owners, political leaders and residents of this region are also hoping things stay safe — and hoping that Putin wins his gamble the Games will turn Sochi into a year-round resort zone. Glitches with not-quite-ready hotels and a run of last-minute construction have already seeded doubts.

OLYMPICS

Scoreboard

Snowboard

Thursday

At Krasnaya Polyana, Russia
Men's Slopestyle Qualifying
Final Ranking

1. Maxence Parrot, Canada, (91.75; 97.50) 97.50 (QF).
2. Ståle Sandbeck, Norway, (45.25; 94.50) 94.50 (QF).
2. Roope Tonteri, Finland, (33.75; 95.75) 95.75 (QF).
4. Petteri Piironen, Finland, (90.75; 80.00) 80.75 (QF).
5. Sven Thorgren, Sweden, (94.25; 36.75) 94.25 (QF).
6. Sébastien Toutant, Canada, (74.25; 87.25) 87.25 (QF).
7. Gerdur Braaten, Norway, (12.75; 91.25) 91.25 (QF).
8. Jamie Nicholls, Britain, (62.25; 86.75) 86.75 (QF).
9. Siegfried Smits, Belgium, (88.25; 91.00) 91.00 (QS).
10. Chas Guldemeier, United States, (86.00; 19.25) 86.00 (QS).
11. Clemens Schatschneider, Austria, (90.00; 24.25) 86.00 (QS).
12. Billy Morgan, Britain, (76.25; 85.50) 85.50 (QS).
13. Mark McMorris, Canada, (29.50; 89.25) 89.25 (QS).
14. Niklas Mattsson, Sweden, (82.75; 57.25) 82.75 (QS).
15. Sage Kotsenburg, United States, (86.50; 81.50) 86.50 (QS).
16. Emil Andre Ulsletten, Norway, (27.25; 73.75) 73.75 (QS).
17. Ryan Stassel, United States, (81.00; 28.75) 81.00 (QS).
18. Charles Reid, Canada, (54.50; 75.50) 75.50 (QS).
19. Jan Scherrer, Switzerland, (74.50; 18.75) 74.50 (QS).
20. Alexey Sobolev, Russia, (63.00; 28.50) 63.00 (QS).
21. Ville Rauma, Finland, (54.75; 21.25) 54.75 (QS).
22. Scotty James, Australia, (36.00; 44.00) 44.00 (QS).
23. Janne Korpi, Finland, (49.75; 35.50) 49.75 (QS).
24. Lucien Koch, Switzerland, (32.00; 29.25) 32.00 (QS).
25. Seamus O'Connor, Ireland, (33.50; 40.00) 40.00 (QS).
26. Yuki Kadono, Japan, (31.00; 16.50) 31.00 (QS).

Women's Slopestyle Qualifying
Final Ranking

1. Anna Gasser, Austria, (89.50; 95.50) 95.50 (QF).
2. Isabel Derungs, Switzerland, (82.50; 87.50) 87.50 (QF).
3. Jamie Anderson, United States, (85.75; 87.50) 87.50 (QF).
4. Torah Bright, Australia, (85.25; 80.00) 85.25 (QF).
5. Keri Padden, New Zealand, (86.25; 38.00) 86.25 (QF).
6. Kelly Clark, U.S. Brien, Canada, (82.00; 80.00) 82.00 (QF).
7. Sarah Waddell, United States, (45.00; 84.75) 84.75 (QF).
8. Jenni Rukajärvi, Finland, (79.00; 23.75) 79.00 (QF).
9. Sarka Pancochova, Czech Republic, (77.25; 13.75) 77.25 (QF).
10. Jenny Jones, Britain, (74.25; 21.75) 74.25 (QF).
11. Rebecca Torr, New Zealand, (70.75; 33.75) 70.75 (QS).
12. Jenna Bassman, Canada, (60.25; 51.50) 60.25 (QS).
13. Kristy Prior, New Zealand, (67.50; 70.50) 70.50 (QS).
14. Jessica Jensen, United States, (34.00; 58.50) 58.50 (QS).
15. Steffi Lutton, New Zealand, (59.75; 34.00) 59.75 (QS).
16. Silje Nordal, Norway, (31.00; 39.00) 39.00 (QS).
17. Nina Candrian, Switzerland, (58.25; 30.00) 58.25 (QS).
18. Cheryl Maas, Netherlands, (18.00; 31.25) 31.25 (QS).
19. Matthew Fuller, Britain, (44.50; 39.00) 44.50 (QS).
20. Merika Enne, Finland, (17.00) 17.00 (QS).

Figure skating

Thursday

At Sochi, Russia

Team Event

1. Yuzuru Hanyu, Japan, 97.58.
 2. Evgeny Plushenko, Russia, 91.39.
 3. Patrick Chan, Canada, 89.71.
 4. Yan Han, China, 85.52.
 5. Florent Amodio, France, 79.93.
 6. Petr Benda, Germany, 76.61.
 7. Jeremy Abbott, United States, 65.65.
 8. Yakov Gudzorzh, Ukraine, 60.51.
 9. Matthew Parr, Britain, 57.40.
 10. Paul Bonifacio Parkinson, United States, 55.65.
1. Tatiana Volosozhar and Maxim Trankov, Russia, 83.79.
 2. Meaghan Duhamel and Eric Radford, Canada, 82.40.
 3. Peng Cheng and Zhang Hao, China, 71.01.
 4. Stefania Bertoni and Ondrej Hotarek, Italy, 70.31.
 5. Marissa Castelli and Simon Sinapov, United States, 64.25.
 6. Tatiana Khromova and Daniel Wendt, Germany, 60.82.
 7. Jennifer Jones and Morgan Ciprès, France, 57.45.
 8. Natsuki Takahashi and Ryuichi Kihara, Japan, 46.56.
 9. Julia Lavrenteva and Yuri Rudyk, Ukraine, 46.40.
 10. Stacey Kemp and David King, Britain, 44.70.

Snowboard

Parrot tops slopestyle qualifying

By EDDIE PELL

The Associated Press

KRASNAYA POLYANA, Russia — And to think, Shaun White chose not to ride down this course.

Snowboarders kicked off competition at the Olympics on Thursday by making the slopestyle layout that White deemed “intimidating” feel anything but that.

Sunny skies. No wind. Decent snow. All in all, slopestyle's debut on the grand stage was a great day for riding rails and grabbing big air and an even better day for scores.

Canadian Max Parrot backed up his win last month at the Winter X Games with a 97.5 — 2½ points short of perfect — in a qualifying run punctuated by a triple-flipping jump with a dead-solid landing, the likes of which will be virtually mandatory to win the gold medal.

He was one of eight riders to reach the 90s on a day in which Australia's Scotty James and Norway's Kjersti Buasa took the worst falls, but both walked away.

“Other riders complained about the course this week. I actually found it really good from Day One to now,” Parrot said.

White pulled out Wednesday, saying he wanted to focus on winning a third straight gold medal in the halfpipe next week. He was in no mind to put his health at risk on a course that took out one of the world's top riders, Torstein Horgmo of Norway, and sent dozens more tumbling in training.

Things still weren't 100 percent ideal when competition began, one day before the opening ceremony.

“It's getting better. Not fully perfect yet. Pretty icy. Makes it hard to shape the jumps clean,” said Norway's Ståle Sandbeck, who scored 94.5.

Leading female contender, Lindsey Vonn never showed up.

Still, there are in the neigh-



SERGEI GENTS/AP

Canada's Maxence Parrot takes a jump Thursday during the men's snowboard slopestyle qualifying at the Rosa Khutor Extreme Park ahead of the Winter Olympics in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia.

no problem the day after banging up her back in practice. She called the course conditions “questionable,” especially for the women.

“It's a challenging course. A lot of impact for everyone,” Anderson said after a 93.5. “Little 15 year olds are, like, ‘I'm not even old and my back is still sore every day. Not even from crashing, just from riding.’”

It made White's absence that much more confounding to several of the 29 men left in the field, who complained that, among other things, his last-minute decision cost someone a spot on the U.S. team.

“It would've been so awesome to have him in here today,” American Sage Kotsenburg said. “He

could've put down a super sick run that could contend. But it's his choice.”

Nobody is feeling White's absence more than Parrot, who is peaking at precisely the right time.

“I'm just mad about it because I want to compete against him,” Parrot said. “I want to know who's better.”

The improved conditions invited such high scores that at least one rider felt free to turn his attention to a more traditional sort of griping: Judging.

Canada's Mark McMorris, a favorite for the gold until he broke a rib at the X Games, landed a triple cork and put down a clean run that ended with him grabbing

his sore back. He received only an 89.25.

But, in keeping with the sunny theme of the first Olympic sport to feature a gigantic Russian matryoshka doll in the middle of the course (And yes, riders can feel free to jump over it) McMorris will get a second chance. In fact, everybody will.

Conceding that it's had form to end anyone's Olympics before they march in the opening ceremony, the format was tweaked slightly. The top four riders in each heat advanced directly to the weekend finals, with everyone else getting another shot to qualify during semifinals.

Friday is an off day where more work on the course is expected.

A few things to watch once the games begin



Opening Ceremony

AFN-Sports

1:30 a.m. Saturday CET

9:30 a.m. Saturday JKT

there really is a mountain in Jamaica. Blue Mountain Peak rises to 7,402 feet” — will brighten the TV coverage.

Then, on Saturday, it's finally “go” time. (Except for the few dozen athletes who actually competed Thursday in a handful of events that started early due to a jam-packed schedule.)

Here are a few things to watch as the action gets going in earnest:

Team skating: Can he or can't he? Russian skating icon Evgeny Plushenko won a spot for a newly added event, team figure skating. It was based upon a performance seen by nobody outside of the country's top skating officials. Dealing with back problems, Plushenko has hardly been seen

in actual competition over the past year. The skater who has already won Olympic gold and two silvers is hoping to add another to his collection in an event designed to bring a sense of camaraderie to a sport that has always been about individual performances. The men's team long program is Sunday.

Seeing double, and triple: On the halfpipe, the Americans have the aptly named brother-sister team of Taylor and Arielle Gold. They compete next Tuesday and Wednesday. Meanwhile, Canada's moguls team does them one better with three sisters from the Dufour-Lapointe family — Justine, Chloe and Maxime. Expect at least two of them to advance to the women's finals on Saturday.

OLYMPICS

Moguls course a work in progress

Slopestyle isn't the only event with problems at Extreme Park

By WILL GRAVES
The Associated Press

KRASNAYA POLYANA, Russia — The ambitious slopestyle course that sent Shaun White sprinting for the serenity and apparent safety of the halfpipe isn't the only Olympic event at Sochi's Extreme Park turning heads and sending riders tumbling down the mountain.

Things have been nearly as dicey in moguls. The U.S. was among several countries to unsuccessfully ask officials Wednesday to tweak the course, expressing concerns about unusual sequencing along the 700-foot sprint across bumps and jumps that make for a unique mixture of daredevil downhill racing and aerials.

"There's a lot of issues with the course," American Patrick Denene said.

Denene, however, cautioned against confusing "issues" with "danger."

"Everybody is scrambling a little bit," he said. "This isn't what anybody expected, but it's really good. We're really liking it. They made a few mistakes while they were building the course and we're fighting those ... but they also did some pretty cool things."

Still, Denene admitted it was a "battle" when the U.S. team arrived for its first practice earlier this week. The course had barely been completed when the Americans popped on their skis and went careening down the hill at speeds of up to 35 mph.

Things didn't go so well. During practice Tuesday, the 26-year-old Denene caught an edge entering the second of the course's two jumps and slammed into it.

Denene underwent X-rays for an unspecified injury and plans to be ready when the men's competition begins next week. There's a chance by then the course's rough edges will have been smoothed out.

There's not that much time for the women, who begin qualifying Thursday. American Heidi Kloser, making her Olympic debut, called the course "challenging," but pointed at improvements during three days of training.

"The course is pretty safe now," she said. "The first day it was a little bit rough because no one had skied it and we were worried about the bottom of the course being more dangerous."

She's no longer concerned about the final moments of her run being any more perilous than any other event on the World Cup circuit. She fell on Tuesday, but chalked that up to the inherent risk that comes with flinging yourself over dozens of balance-testing bumps and two jumps,

where skiers mix a combination of spins and flips.

Denene and Kloser echoed the sentiments of snowboard riders who are questioning whether the slopestyle course — located about a half-mile down the mountain from the moguls run — pushes the boundaries of safety a little too far.

Several riders expressed surprise over the size and the speed of the slopestyle route, which includes a mixture of rails and big-time jumps designed to allow competitors enough air time to pack in two or three flips.

Denene sees both sides of the argument. Yes, it's different than what he's used to. He's not entirely sure that's a bad thing.

"This is a moguls skiing competition," he said, "so it's good to have some crazy moguls in there."



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN HAYWARD, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

At top, Canada's moguls skier Mikael Kingsbury flies over a jump during a freestyle skiing training run in Krasnaya Polyna, Russia, on Wednesday. At bottom, athletes take part in a moguls course inspection prior to training. Many of the same problems that have beset the Slopestyle course in Sochi and led to American snowboarder Shaun White to withdraw from that event are causing concern for moguls skiers, who wonder if the course might push the boundaries of safety too far.

OLYMPICS

FREESTYLE SKIING

Kearney has changed, but desire remains

Women's moguls gold medalist ready for return to top spot

By TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

HANNAH KEARNEY answered a question about her readiness to defend the Olympic women's moguls gold medal with a question of her own.

"Have you seen my thighs?" And no, she wasn't kidding. The U.S. freestyle skiing star is simply built for her sport, built to fight for the top spot on the Olympic podium, the perch that she occupied four years ago and the one she plans to be in again on Saturday when the women's moguls medals are awarded at the Sochi Games.

"I know there's no place to go from the top but to fall or to stay there. It's easier to be the underdog. There's like scientific research about that. So I use that as motivation."

Hannah Kearney
US freestyle skier

one wants to beat me even more and I know there's no place to go from the top but to fall or to stay there," Said Kearney, who finished well clear of her competition Thursday. "It's easier to be the underdog. There's like scientific research about that. So I use that as motivation. 'OK, I'm not the underdog.' If you're wearing the No. 1 bib and you're the Olympic gold medalist, no matter what happens on that day you're never going to be the underdog, so it changes your mentality a little bit."

Since her Olympic debut eight years ago, more than her mentality has changed.

Physically, Kearney barely recognizes the person she was

in 2006, hence the quip about if anyone has noticed the aforementioned thighs. She's become one of the faces of her sport, plus has seen her goals evolve and get reset on occasion as her list of accomplishments grows.

One other method of illustrating how much has changed in her life since 2006? Back then, hard as it might seem to believe nowadays, Kearney didn't even own a cell phone.

"Eight years is a very significant portion of my life," said Kearney, 27. "So of course, I've changed a lot. You're bound to grow up in that time traveling the world and competing."

What hasn't changed is her desire to win, especially now.

She says this is her final Olympics, so there's an obvious sense of urgency. She's already won once on the course that will be used for the Sochi Games, though conditions and even the profile of the slope will not be what she experienced a year ago. Kearney and her U.S. teammates saw the Olympic course for the first time Sunday, the general consensus being that it should treat the Americans fairly well.

Teammate Eliza Outtrim was second in that women's test event on the Sochi Olympic course last year, while Heather McPhie was fourth — a tiebreaker that went the wrong way for the Americans was the only thing preventing a sweep that day. So clearly, the Americans have at least the benefit of having some good memories of the Olympic venue.

"Being here, I just feel relaxed and really, really excited to ski," Outtrim said.

The format for the Olympic competition has changed to one that's considered to be more physically taxing, which Kearney said will benefit the Americans, whose level of fitness she raved about on Monday.

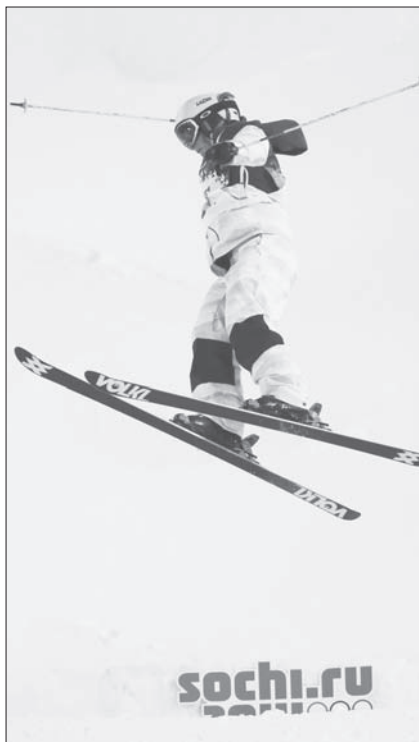
Her history shows that she can win anywhere, though. And when the spotlight is brightest, like it will be this weekend, Kearney expects even more from herself than usual.

"Past success on the venue sort of means everything and absolutely nothing," Kearney said. "It means everything because you're like, 'All right, I've won on this



PHOTOS BY SERGEI GRITS/AP

Above, Hannah Kearney of the United States stands with her skis after a qualifying session for the women's moguls at the Rosa Kutor Extreme Park ahead of the 2014 Winter Olympics on Thursday in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia. Below, Kearney takes to the air off of a jump during qualifying.



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On AFN-Sports this weekend:

XXII Winter Olympic Games Opening Ceremony
1:30 a.m. Saturday CET
9:30 a.m. Saturday JKT

Women's Hockey:
USA vs Finland
9 a.m. Saturday CET
5 p.m. Saturday JKT

Figure Skating - Team Event:
Ladies' Short Program, Pairs' Free Skate
5 p.m. Saturday CET
1 a.m. Sunday JKT

Figure Skating - Team Event:
Men's Luge:
Singles Competition
6 a.m. Sunday CET
2 p.m. Sunday JKT

Figure Skating - Team Event:
Gold Medal Final
4 p.m. Sunday CET
Midnight Sunday JKT

course, I'm definitely going to win again."

"Then again, it means nothing. The course is not very similar to how it was last year. ... Plus, it's the Olympic Games. There was absolutely nothing on the line, technically, a year ago. And now everything, supposedly, is on the line."

OLYMPICS

BOBSLED

American program best it's ever been

By TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

When USA-1 crossed the finish line and claimed four-man gold at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, the American bobsled program looked as good as ever.

It might be better now.

Steven Holcomb is still in the front seat of perhaps two gold-medal contenders that will represent the U.S. at the Sochi Games. But he's hardly the only hope the Americans have on the Olympic stage. Co-starring this time is a women's team that has as good a chance at winning gold, along with some new two-man sleds built by BMW that are likely the fastest in the sport.

"We've had great results this year, so I'm pretty happy with the way it's performing," Holcomb said. "We're working hard to make sure that these sleds go as fast as they possibly can. We've been testing things left and right, week to week — it's all part of the process."

Holcomb and his team — Steven Langton, Curt Tomasevich and Chris Fogt — will be among the favorites for gold in the four-man race, the last of the Olympics.

By then, the Americans might already have a medal haul going.

Women's bobsled might generate as much buzz for the Americans as anything else on the track in Sochi, and it's not just because of the star power generated by two-time Summer Olympic hurdler Lolo Jones and Olympic gold-medalist sprinter Lauryn Williams being selected to the squad as push athletes.

Drivers Jamie Greubel and Elana Meyers have been medal contenders on the World Cup circuit in just about every stop this season, and Meyers — a 2010 Olympic bronze medalist as a push athlete — will likely have top pusher in Aja Evans in her sled.

Jones and Williams have proved their mettle with World Cup medals, and in Williams' case, that's doubly impressive considering she's been a bobsledder for less than six months.

Williams and Jones will become the ninth and 10th Americans to compete in both the summer and winter Olympics. Williams has a chance to be only the second to win gold in both.

And Holcomb should have a shot in two-man as well, given the technological advancement of the sleds BMW built for the Americans. The U.S. hasn't won two-man gold since 1936 and hasn't medaled in that race since 1952.

Of course, Holcomb's no stranglehold streak-busting. The U.S. didn't have a four-man bobsled gold in 62 years before Vancouver.

Here's five things to watch in Olympic bobsledding:

1 Uphill climb: The Sochi track is unusual because of the three uphill portions. Obviously, that's a deterrent to speed, but more importantly it also means that any



MATTHIAS SCHRADER/AP

Driver Steven Holcomb, front, relies on team Curtis Tomasevich, Steven Langton and Christopher Fogt to get the sled off to a quick start.

mistakes drivers make going into those climbs could prove devastating to medal chances. A little bit of lost speed could turn into a big problem in a hurry.

2 All nations: Any number of nations could medal in bobsledding this year, showing that there might be more elite-level sliders than ever. The Americans, Germans, Canadians, Latvians, Russians and Swiss are among those firmly in medal chases, and all would be downright disappointed if they didn't get to make at least one trip to the podium.

3 Kiriass finale? At 39, this will likely be the final Olympics for German star Sandra Kiriass, still widely considered the top women's pilot of all-time. She lacks the speed at the start that her younger, more athletic challengers have, but she more than makes up for it in driving skill.

4 They're back: For the first time since 2002, Jamaica is sending a bobsled to the Olympics. Pilot Winston Watts will be at the controls of the two-man sled, the Jamaicans' only entry in Sochi. It's the fourth Olympics for Watts (who previously went by Watt), and he'll turn 47 a day after the Opening Ceremony.

5 O... Russia!? Pierre Lueders is at home for his second straight Olympics. He raced for Canada at the 2010 Vancouver Games, his fifth straight time representing his country. This year, he's coaching the Russians. It's not uncommon for people from one country to coach another nation's team, but Lueders was the face of Canadian bobsledding for about two decades.

Athletes make their push for medals, not glamour

By TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

The pay is awful, the workplace is freezing, making a mistake is about the only way to get noticed and trips down the mountain are always accompanied by some big-time turbulence.

Such is life as a bobsled push athlete.

Glamour-seekers need not apply. They are the offensive linemen of bobsledding, anonymous yet essential. Drivers get all the credit, but on race day it's often the push athletes who make all the difference — and the corps of pushers who'll cram into the sleds that the U.S. has taken to the Sochi Olympics may be the world's best.

"I think it's the deepest group we've ever had," U.S. Bobsled and Skeleton Federation CEO Darrin Steele said.

Hoping to win medals in two-man, four-man and women's bobsledding in Sochi, the U.S. has spent tons of time and money on making their sleds as fast as possible for sliding's biggest races. But ultimately, winning and losing on the Olympic stage will largely hinge upon how effective the people who will be pushing those sleds are in their five-second explosive stints of work when the lights turns green.

While keeping perfect time with the driver, the push athlete has to run at the same pace down an icy slope, find a way to get that sled going as fast as humanly possible before jumping inside, then remain low in an aerodynamic position for the rest of a trip that looks smooth on television but is actually quite bumpy.

I love that extra emphasis of the Olympics because that's our biggest race," said U.S. veteran pusher Curt Tomasevich, who was part of the team

that won a four-man gold at Vancouver in 2010 and is making Sochi his final Olympics. "That's what keeps you going. When it's every four years it's four times the commitment, and it means even more to an athlete when they get there."

In addition to the sessions they all spend in a gym in a constant quest to get stronger and faster, the push athletes typically also serve as sled crews. They help pack the crates to ship the sleds around the world. They spend hours several days a week sanding down the steel runners, by hand, buffing away even the tiniest imperfections. And they don't really get much of a say in anything; the driver, pretty much, is the boss.

"I didn't know what to expect," women's pusher Lauryn Williams said. "I didn't know how much was involved, or how much I was going to like it."

Williams, Lolo Jones and Aja Evans are the three women on the Olympic push roster, all of them competing in the Winter Games for the first time.

Tomasevich, Steve Langton and Chris Fogt will be with Steven Holcomb in USA-1 for the four-man race in Sochi. Tomasevich has won golds on both the Olympic and world-championship stages, Langton helped push Holcomb to two- and four-man world titles in 2012, and Fogt was with now-retired pilot John Napier for the Vancouver Games.

They crashed out of that race, and Fogt has been waiting for a second chance since.

"No one will ever ask, 'How did you race in Altenberg?' No one will ever ask, 'How did you race in Park City?' either," Fogt said. "It's always, 'How was your race at the Olympic Games? And for the past four years, I've had to say we didn't finish the race. That's been a lot of my motivation. I've worked my way up and those days when I don't want to train, not wanting to answer that question anymore has added fuel to my fire."

OLYMPICS

ALPINE PREVIEW

Shiffrin could shine at Sochi

BY HOWARD FENDRICH
The Associated Press

Before the races start, the biggest storyline in Alpine skiing at the Sochi Olympics centers around someone who will not be there: Lindsey Vonn, the reigning downhill gold medalist and a four-time overall World Cup champion.

If not for her surgically repaired right knee, Vonn would have been the one to watch, not only on the slopes — where she might have been expected to at least match her two-medal showing from Vancouver in 2010 — but also off them, in part because of her boyfriend, Tiger Woods.

“We want to grow as a sport, and like every other sport, we are dependent on the international stars,” said Atle Skaardal, the International Ski Federation women’s race director. “And Lindsey Vonn is definitely an international star.”

Her injury-forced absence means there will be room for other ski racers to earn victories, grab attention and have their stories told. In some respects, the 10 events in the mountains — starting with the men’s downhill on Sunday, weather permitting — turn into a referendum on the next possible face of the sport.

On the women’s side, Maria Hoefl-Riesch of Germany, Lara Gut of Switzerland, Tina Maze of Slovenia, Tina Weirather of Liechtenstein, and 18-year-old Mikaela Shiffrin of the United States have the potential to win more than one medal.

Among the men, Aksel Lund Svindal of Norway, Marcel Hirscher of Austria, and Ted Ligety of the United States probably are the likeliest to exit these Winter Games as household names around the globe.

Here are five Alpine skiing storylines to follow during the Sochi Olympics.

1 “The next Vonn”: Already given that label by some, Shiffrin might be a bigger favorite in the slalom than any other woman is in any other event. She owns a World Cup title and world championship gold in slalom.

“Mikaela is very, very success-oriented in her approach. It really reminds you of someone like Lindsey,” U.S. women’s Alpine coach Alex Hoedlmoser said. “She is training a lot. She puts everything aside. The focus is all on the sport.”

Still, Shiffrin leaves time for being a typical teen — well, one who travels the World Cup circuit with her mother — such as when she mashed up Lupe Fiasco’s “Battle Scars” and Coldplay’s “The Scientist,” then had that musical combo in her head while finishing in a giant slalom at home in Colorado.

As another American teen,



Mikaela Shiffrin of the U.S., an 18-year-old from Colorado who already has a World Cup title and world championship gold in slalom, will be one of the skiers to watch in these Lindsay Vonn-less Olympics.

swimmer Missy Franklin, made clear at the London Olympics, there’s something about success at a very young age that captivates an audience.

2 Aksel’s rise: Svindal already enjoys rock-star status in Europe, thanks to his pair of overall World Cup titles and his three medals at the Vancouver Games.

Even he’ll tell you he’s got a shot at medals in four of the five events this time: downhill, super-G, super-combined and giant slalom.

“I have really good chances in two events,” Svindal said, “and I have decent chances in the two other events.”

3 Austria’s comeback: Skiing is a big deal in Austria, which has won nearly twice as many Olympic Al-

pine medals as any other country, including 14 in 2006. But in 2010, Austria came away with only four medals — and zero for their men for the first time at an Olympics they entered.

Hirscher is expected to play a big part in rectifying that. He’s the two-time reigning overall World Cup champion and took gold in slalom and silver in giant slalom at last year’s world championships.

4 Women to watch: Hoefl-Riesch, not Vonn, was the only woman to leave Vancouver’s slopes with two golds, and the German is still as good as anyone out there. If Hoefl-Riesch doesn’t dominate, Maze (who broke the record for most World Cup points last season), Gut (who missed the 2010 Olympics with a dislocated hip) or

Weirather (whose mother, Hanni Wenzel, won two gold medals at the 1980 Lake Placid Games) could.

5 American veterans: The U.S. left Vancouver with eight Alpine medals, their best showing at an Olympics and twice as many as any other nation collected in 2010. That won’t be easy to replicate, especially without Vonn, but there are folks with plenty of experience and success on the team, including Ligety (an Olympic gold medalist in 2006, and three-time world champion in 2013), Bode Miller (owner of five Olympic medals, including three in 2010 — gold in super-combined, silver in super-G, bronze in downhill), and Julia Mancuso (one gold in 2006, two silvers in 2010).



Luke Steyn, Zimbabwe’s first Winter Olympian, will compete in the slalom and giant slalom.

5 things: Weather can wreak havoc

FROM BACK PAGE

3 Top teens: Mikaela Shiffrin’s name will surely become familiar to U.S. sports fans; the 18-year-old from Colorado is favored in slalom and carries the tag “The Next Lindsey Vonn” (Vonn is sidelined after knee surgery). Another teen who could earn a medal: Norway’s Henrik Kristoffersen, 19, who won the last pre-Sochi World Cup slalom on Jan. 28. It was his third top-three finish in a slalom during January.

4 Solo artists: Classical-pop violinist Vanessa-Mae’s manager has said she will represent Thailand on the Alpine slopes after meeting International Ski Federation qualifying criteria. The Singapore-born, London-raised musician competes as Vanessa Vanakorn, using her Thai father’s surname. Also worth watching: Zimbabwe’s first Winter Olympian, 20-year-old Luke Steyn, and Hubertus von Hohenlohe, a German prince who competes for Mexico, turned 55 on Sunday, and is at his sixth Olympics.

5 Wacky weather: Race after race was postponed four years ago at the Vancouver Games; this sport depends on acceptable weather. The last pre-Olympics World Cup weekend showed what can go wrong: Too much snow in St. Moritz, Switzerland, scuttled downhill training, and fog on Feb. 1 forced cancellation of what was supposed to be the last speed race for men before Sochi. As it is, that race was moved from Germany because of a lack of snow there. Women’s races moved from one Slovenian resort to another because of a lack of snow, but rain and fog prompted officials to cancel a giant slalom at the new site. There’s no rain or snow in the forecast this week at the Olympic mountain, and the temperature is expected to hover around freezing.

SPORTS

**Crimson Tide on top**Alabama is No. 1 on strong signing day for SEC | **Page 54**

WINTER OLYMPICS

Alpine skiing: 5 things to know

By HOWARD FENDRICH
The Associated Press

To get a sense of which Alpine ski racers to keep an eye on during the Sochi Olympics, take a look at who is peaking at the right time.

One example: Exactly two weeks before the scheduled start of Olympic competition at the Krasnaya Polyana ski resort, Lara Gut of Switzerland won the last pre-Sochi women's World Cup speed race. Another: The day before Gut's super-G victory, Tina Maze of Slovenia won a downhill, her only first-place finish this season.

Bode Miller, the 36-year-old who grew up in New Hampshire and already owns five Olympic medals, turned in a pair of top-three finishes in a downhill and super-G on Jan. 25-26. His U.S. teammate, 2006 Turin gold medalist Ted Ligety of Park City, Utah, won a giant slalom by 1½ seconds on Feb. 2. "Hopefully," Ligety said, "I can carry that confidence over the next couple weeks."

With the first Winter Games race — the men's downhill — scheduled for Sunday, here are five things to know about Alpine skiing:

1 Alpine primer: There are speed (downhill, super-G) and technical (slalom, giant slalom) events, plus the super combined, which, as the name implies, combines times from runs of downhill and slalom. Downhill is one run, with the longest course and fastest speeds; men can reach 75 mph. Slalom is two runs — different courses for each — with the shortest length and quickest turns through at least 50 gates. Giant slalom, also known as GS, is also two runs, with fewer gates spaced farther apart. Super-G is one run that's sort of a hybrid of downhill and giant slalom; gates are spaced similarly to a giant slalom but with fewer turns and greater speed; it joined the Olympics in 1988.

2 Sloppy skiing?: Truth is, as U.S. women's Alpine coach Alex Hoedlmoser points out, even the most talented athletes can flop on the sport's most important days, so the skiing in Sochi might not always be of the highest quality. "A lot of people freeze up at big events. It just, like, freaks them out," he says. "In training, we see a lot better skiing a lot of times than we do on the actual race day."

SEE 5 THINGS ON PAGE 63



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- Bobsled preview, Page 62
- Bumpy start for moguls, Page 60
- Scoreboard, early results, Page 59
- Speedskaters go high-tech, Page 58

U.S. skier Bode Miller, a five-time Olympic medalist, enters the Sochi Games with some momentum: Miller finished in the top three in a World Cup downhill and super-G on Jan. 25-26.

URS FLUEELER, KEYSTONE/AP

Wrestling: Europe sectionals this weekend; Kanto teams get final prep for Far East

High schools, Pages 56-57

